

DISCARD



“Help me into the fort,” he commanded. “If this is mortal, I’ll
die at the head of my column” [Page 258.]

THE BOOK OF BRAVERY

BEING TRUE STORIES
IN AN ASCENDING SCALE OF COURAGE

COLLECTED AND RECOUNTED
BY
HENRY WYSHAM LANIER

ILLUSTRATED

*"Everything may be borne by brave men."
—Richard Cœur de Lion.*

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THE BOOK OF BRAVERY

BEING TRUE STORIES
OF AN AMERICAN BOY OF COURAGE

CONTAINS 100 ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

ONE of the boys had had an accident; the doctor had been obliged to take several stitches in sewing him together again; and he had borne the pain like an Indian.

Naturally, we began to talk of bravery.

"Do you remember any very brave man or woman in history?"

There was a dead silence.

"What! Not one? Well, have you ever known or heard of anybody who did what seemed a very brave thing?"

Nobody could recall a single action which seemed notably courageous! Starting in enthusiastically to fill this vacuum, I found my own store of tales of valorous deeds did not go far: many were so lacking in details as to be useless. We got some books—of which there have been many since Miss Yonge's "Book of Golden Deeds," of golden memory. In spite of the number, there seemed a need for one more, not only with a larger number of true stories than had yet been put between covers, but with these records arranged so as to make some distinction between the bravery of Pizarro and that of Regulus, even between Cœur de Lion and Bayard.

This volume is the result.

And though one who looks at the thousands of new volumes each year is almost tempted to apologize for adding even one drop to the flood, I doubt if there can be too many books about bravery.

For courage is almost the foundation of character. A bad nature may be built on it, but it seems as if a good one cannot be based on anything else. It is the beginning of everything worth while. Without it life isn't worth living.

Browning says:

"A people is but the attempt of many
To rise to the completer life of one:
And those who live as models for the mass
Are singly of more value than they all."

And the psychologists tell us that one of the profoundest and most dominating impulses of the human mind is that which causes man to *imitate*; bravery and fear are both contagious. In addition to the fear of being a coward, there is to a soldier the positive inspiration of daring in watching one's comrades, in charging shoulder to shoulder.

Make no mistake about it: some men are naturally intrepid, but the bravest are those who fear and conquer it. And there is almost no limit to the possibilities of training one's own nature to encounter danger coolly; not only can one form a habit of attacking the difficult thing, of calmly measuring and meeting what would once have sent him flying in a panic—but there comes after a while a realization of that physiological fact that "danger makes us more alive." The mind and body summon up their utmost powers to meet the emergency. One lives more fully. And this flood-tide of power is so keen and satisfying a delight in itself that it often seems worth facing anything just to experience it.

The first step, then, in getting the most of what life has to offer is to rid oneself of fear. The surest in-

fluence in this is the memory of what other men have done.

So these tales, many of them well known, are their own best excuse.

Whenever possible, these stories are told in the words of the chief actors or those of eye-witnesses. It follows, of course, that the quotations are the same as in some previous collections.

In one or two instances, scenes which were probable have been added to round out the picture or make it more vivid, but only where this was possible without violating historical accuracy.

It would be easy to make from these tales of twenty-four centuries and many nations a list of volumes that would at least form a foundation on which any one could build for himself a Library of Valiant Deeds.

And surely every home and every school should have such a collection, large or small.

The author wishes to acknowledge with thanks the courtesy and kindness of Messrs. Harper & Brothers in allowing the use of "A Swim for Life in the Arctic" from Dr. Nansen's "Farthest North," which they publish.

HENRY W. LANIER.

April, 1918.

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INTRODUCTION

THERE are many dark pages in the history of Man, even during those few thousand years of which we have a fairly exact record. As for the hundreds, or thousands, of centuries in which he was struggling upward from his ape kindred of the Glacial Period (whose very existence has only been suspected for a few decades) it is probably fortunate that the veil of oblivion has fallen upon them. They would not make pleasant reading for us to-day, save by a sort of awed thankfulness at what we have progressed from.

But happily there is a whole library of man's actions to read which makes us thrill with pride in our fellows and their possibilities.

The record of brave men and women is a vast and inspiring roster including all times and nations. Always there have been, are, and will be dauntless spirits who have endured the utmost rigors of the elements, of savage beasts, of their far more dangerous fellow men; who have looked unflinchingly into the face of the King of Terrors himself; and to stand beside whom, even in imagination, makes us realize afresh how human nature may approach the godlike in thus mastering its own destiny.

When one thinks of it, however, "bravery" is a most comprehensive term. Clearly, any quality which includes such vast extremes as the fight for life of some trapped criminal and the death on the cross of Jesus of Nazareth needs some classification.

It is with this idea that the present collection has

been arranged. Out of the tens of thousands of true stories available, a number have been selected which seem to group themselves into ascending degrees of courage, from that through which a man faces all dangers in order to save his own life, up to the supreme bravery that leads a man or woman to endure untold sufferings in order to die, or (higher still, I fancy) to live, for others.

First come the rising planes of physical bravery; then that intrepidity of the mind which lifts still higher; and finally the courage of the spirit which includes these others and so much else besides.

From Cæsar Borgia, escaping from his well-earned enemies, to Father Damien, devoting his life to the lepers of Molokai with the certainty of a slow and hideous death—that is the gamut of human courage.

The present volume deals with a number of the more primitive types, up to some memorable cases of disciplined bravery.

PART I

FACING DEATH TO AVOID IT

Man shares with the animals the courage that springs from desperation. A cornered rat will fight for its life against odds of a hundred to one in size. That is bravery, in its a, b, c; and under the influence of this feeling men have since times immemorial performed acts of most reckless daring, from those shadowy days when the cave-dweller of a hundred thousand years ago suddenly came upon the monstrous bear whose cavern he had picked for his own home. Even now, at the moment you read this, some resolute man somewhere—on the sea or in some unsettled country—is taking his life in his hands and risking it as the only chance to avoid death.

Looked at in this way, you may think such deeds are hardly bravery at all; such a man may be driven mainly by fear. But courage is courage, even when born of cowardice. It is facing odds, fighting difficulties, compelling circumstance. And the magnificent endurance, fortitude, ingenuity, and patience which have been shown in such situations by many hardy spirits surely entitle them to a place among the world's brave men. The instinctive, selfish Will to Live has created many an epic tale of this lowest plane of bravery.

Let us then, from the myriads of such instances in the history of the race, glance at just a few memorable cases of the last four centuries, including an Englishman, two Spaniards, three Italians, a German, a Norwegian, and

a group of Americans. Several of these are tales of escapes from prisons in which the fugitives displayed almost superhuman persistence and intrepidity.

It should be noted that some of these men, especially the immortal author of "Don Quixote," exhibited also qualities of a much higher order than this primitive life-saving daring. But since most of the famous escapes from captivity belong in this division, the tale of Cervantes and his amazing five years in Algerian prisons is included with them.

CHAPTER I

THE ESCAPE OF THE WICKEDEST MAN IN HISTORY

THE very name of Borgia carries a suggestion of shuddering horror to our ears. There are few crimes of which human nature is capable that are not recorded of Cæsar Borgia, his beautiful sister Lucrezia, and his infamous father, Pope Alexander VI. Made cardinal in the year of the discovery of America; created Duke de Valentinois by King Louis XII of France, and marrying that monarch's cousin, the daughter of the King of Navarre, six years later; he spent eleven years in writing his name black in history through every species of perfidy, cruelty, and depravity.

In June, 1504, the first taste of retribution began to come to him. Captured by treachery, he was imprisoned at the Castle of Medina del Campo in Spain, not far from Salamanca.

Two weary years he remained in captivity, hoping that his royal connection and powerful friends would come to his assistance.

But the great allies of such a man are apt to fall away when his wings are clipped. No sign of succor came, and even the captive's grim resolution began to weaken as it beat itself vainly against the vigilance of his jailers.

He knew only too well as he reflected, during the long weary days, upon the deeds which had won him his many bitter enemies, that his life was forfeit a

dozen times over; and he knew that his captors would put him to death the instant they felt themselves strong enough to risk reprisal.

Then, one morning at breakfast, help came from a humble and unlooked-for source.

Borgia was disconsolately cutting his loaf of bread when the knife struck something hard.

Surprised and indignant, he broke the loaf apart. There lay a file, a bottle containing a sleeping-draft, and a note from a poor man-of-arms of his, Michelotto, who had followed his master to Spain. The message said that he must do his best to get free with these weapons, and that Michelotto and a friend would await him every night with three horses on the road between the castle and the village.

The great Alexander Dumas tells the story:

Two years' imprisonment had weighed too heavily on Cæsar for him to waste a single moment, now that he had a chance to regain his freedom. He, therefore, lost no time in beginning to work on one of the bars of his window, which opened on an inside court, and soon contrived to cut through so far that a violent shake would enable him to remove it altogether. But the window was nearly seventy feet above the ground, while the only way of leaving the court was by a door reserved for the Governor alone, the key of which was always carried about his person. By day it was suspended from his belt, by night it was under his pillow. To gain possession of this key was the most difficult part of the matter.

Now, in spite of the fact that he was a prisoner, Cæsar had invariably been treated with all the respect due to his name and rank. Every day at the dinner-hour he was conducted from the room in which

he was confined to the Governor's apartments and was received as an honored guest. Don Manuel himself was an old soldier who had served with distinction under Ferdinand, and, while carrying out punctiliously his orders for Cæsar's safe custody, he admired his military talents and listened with pleasure to the story of his fights. He had often desired that Cæsar should breakfast as well as dine with him, but, luckily for himself, the prisoner, perhaps aided by some presentiment, had always refused this favor. It was owing to his solitude that he was able to conceal the instruments for his escape sent by Michelotto.

Now it happened that the very same day that he had received them, Cæsar contrived to stumble and twist his foot as he was returning to his room. When the hour of dinner came he tried to go down, but declared that walking hurt him so much that he should be obliged to give it up, so the Governor paid him a visit instead and found him stretched on his bed.

The next day Cæsar was no better; his dinner was ordered to be served up-stairs, and the Governor paid him a visit as before. He found his prisoner so dull and bored with his own company, that he offered to come and share his supper. Cæsar accepted the offer with gratitude and joy.

This time it was the prisoner who did the honors of the table, and Borgia was particularly charming and courteous in manner. The Governor seized the opportunity of putting some questions as to his capture, and inquired, with the pride of a Castilian noble, who set honor above all, what was the exact truth as to the way in which Gonsalvo de Cordova and Ferdinand had broken their faith with him. Cæsar showed every disposition to give him satisfaction on this point,

but indicated by a sign that he could not speak freely before the valets. This precaution was so natural that the Governor could not seem offended at it; he dismissed his attendants, so that he and his companion remained alone. When the door was shut, Cæsar filled his glass and that of the Governor, and proposed the King's health. The Governor emptied his glass at once, and Cæsar began his story; but he had hardly told a third of it when, in spite of its exciting adventures, the eyes of his guest closed as if by magic, and his head fell on the table in a deep sleep.

At the end of half an hour, the servants, not hearing any noise, entered the room, and found the two boon companions, one on the table and the other under it. There was nothing so unusual about such an event to excite their suspicions, so they contented themselves with carrying Don Manuel to his chamber and laying Cæsar on his bed; they then locked the door with great care, leaving the prisoner alone.

For a minute or two longer Cæsar lay still, apparently plunged in a profound slumber, but when the sound of footsteps had completely died away, he softly raised his head; opened his eyes, and moved toward the door, rather slowly, it is true, but without seeming to feel any ill effects from his accident on the previous day. He stood still for a few seconds with his ear at the key-hole, then, raising himself, with a strange expression of triumph on his face, he passed his hand over his forehead, and, for the first time since the guards had left the room, breathed freely.

But there was no time to be lost, and without a moment's delay he fastened the door from the inside as securely as it was fastened without. He next extinguished his lamp, threw open his window, and



The rope was too short

finished cutting through the bar. This done, he took off the bandages tied around his leg, tore down the curtains, both of his window and his bed, and made them into strips, adding to them sheets, table-cloths, napkins, and whatever else he could lay hands on. At last he had a rope between fifty and sixty feet long, which he secured firmly at one end to the bar next to the one that he had sawn away; then, mounting on the window-ledge, he began the most dangerous part of his expedition by trusting himself to this frail support. Happily, Cæsar was as strong as he was agile, and slid down the whole length of the cord without accident; but when he had reached the very end, he tried in vain to touch the earth with his feet. The rope was too short.

Cæsar's position was terrible. The darkness of the night prevented his knowing how far he might be above the ground, and his exertions had so fatigued him that he could not have gone back even had he wished. There was no help for it. After muttering a short prayer, he let go the rope, and fell—a distance of twelve or fifteen feet.

The danger he had escaped was too great for the fugitive to mind some slight bruises caused by his fall, so he jumped up, and taking his bearings, made straight for the little door which stood between him and freedom. When he reached it he felt in his pocket for the key, and a cold sweat broke out on his face as he found it was not there. Had he forgotten it in his room, or had he lost it in his descent?

Collecting his thoughts as well as he could, he soon came to the conclusion that it must have fallen out of his pocket as he climbed down the rope. So he made his way a second time cautiously across the

court, trying to discover the exact spot where it might be, by the aid of the wall of a cistern, which he had caught hold of to raise himself from the ground. But the lost key was so small and insignificant that there was little chance he would ever see it. However, it was his last resource, and Cæsar was searching for it with all his might, when suddenly a door opened and the night patrol came out, preceded by two torches. At first Cæsar gave himself up for lost. Then, remembering the water-butt that was behind him, he at once slid into it up to his neck, watching with intense anxiety the movements of the soldiers who were advancing toward his hiding-place. They passed within a few feet, crossed the court, and vanished through the door opposite; but though all this had taken such a very short time, the light of the torches had enabled Cæsar to distinguish the key lying on the ground, and hardly had the gate closed on the soldiers, when he was once more master of his liberty.

Half-way between the castle and the village the Count of Benevento and Michelotto awaited him with a led horse. Cæsar flung himself on its back and all three set out for Navarre, where, after three days' hard riding, they found an asylum with the King, Jean d'Albret, father of Cæsar's wife.

CHAPTER II

HOW AN ARTIST OUTWITTED A POPE

ONE of the most brilliant craftsmen, metal-workers, and designers that Italy has produced, Benvenuto Cellini, was also a personality who was bound to be a centre of stirring happenings—which he did not fail to make the most of in his own “Life.”

In October, 1538, he was accused by his enemies (of whom he had the greatest plenty!) of having stolen from the Pope precious stones valued at eighty thousand dollars. The results were quick and alarming.

Cellini relates that one morning he was walking along the strada Julia, when the Bargello met him with all his force.

“You are the Pope’s prisoner,” said the officer.

“Chrespino!” exclaimed the amazed artist, “you have arrested me by mistake!”

“No,” returned Chrespino, “you are the talented Benvenuto, and I know you very well; and I have to take you to the Castle Sant’ Agniola, whither go lords and persons of talent like yourself.”

With this poor comfort, Benvenuto gave up his arms, remembering with a chill that it was on this precise spot that he had slain Pompeo, the papal jeweller, two years before. He was taken to a dungeon up in the keep of the fortress, reflecting that this was the first time in his adventurous life of thirty-seven years that he had tasted imprisonment.

He indignantly denied the accusations against him when examined, and he declares that the missing

jewels were found, but that the Pope was determined to compass his death, and would not release him despite the demands of King Francis.

Having made friends with the guards, some of these urged him to escape; but he said he had given his word to the Castellan and could not abuse it, though one of these men assured him the Pope meant to have his life.

Then a shifty but eloquent friar, a fellow prisoner, urged that a captive's word was not binding. Cellini still refused. The friar gradually won his admiration by his talk and readings, and, adroitly leading the clever artificer on, the latter declared that he could open the prison locks as easily as he could eat a piece of fresh cheese. Cellini thereupon made good his boast by showing the friar how to take a wax impression; the friar adopted this plan and endeavored to get keys made for himself, but was detected; and Benvenuto, for his share in the plot, was locked up close instead of having his former freedom.

Hearing that the friar was to be hanged, and smarting under the insults he had received over the matter, Cellini decided he must be ready for emergencies.

He had new and coarse, clean sheets brought him, and did not return the soiled ones, saying he had given them to the soldiers. A mattress was secretly emptied of its contents, and the straw burned. With these materials he made a sort of rope of strips fastened together, which he thought might be long enough to reach from the high keep to the ground.

Meanwhile, one of his people almost killed a workman of the Pope's in the streets, and Cellini only avoided the trial which he felt would at that moment be fatal by the lucky chance of being able to prove

through the Castellan that the offender had been dismissed from his service. This made him the more anxious to escape.

Listen to the artist's own vivid story:

"This Castellan had every year certain attacks of illness that entirely turned his brain. On one occasion it seemed to him that he was a jar of oil; another time it seemed to him that he was dead and they must needs bury him. This time he began by imagining that he was a bat, and while out walking he used to scream softly as bats do. He also made movements with his hands and body as if he wanted to fly. His doctors and servants humored him, and since he took pleasure in hearing me talk they constantly took me to him.

"He began by asking me if I had ever the fancy to fly: to which I replied, that all those things which were most difficult for men I had most gladly sought to do and had done; and as to this subject of flying, since nature had given me a body very strong and uncommonly fitted for running and leaping, I felt assured that by using the skill of my hands too I could manage to fly. He questioned me as to the method I should adopt: to which I replied, that having observed the flying creatures, there was only one whose natural gifts I might by art imitate, and that was the bat.

"When the poor man heard the word 'bat,' which was then his special delusion, he gave a shout: 'He speaks the truth; he speaks the truth. That is the thing.' Then he turned to me. 'Benvenuto, if any one gave you the means, would you have the courage to fly?' To this I replied that if it would give me my freedom afterward, I had plenty of courage to fly to Prati, making myself wings of waxed linen.

“‘I, too, would have enough courage,’ replied the Castellan; ‘but the Pope has commanded me to keep guard over you as if you were his own eyes, and I know you are an ingenious devil who would escape; but I will have you locked in with a hundred keys so that you shall not manage it.’”

Benvenuto besought him not to do this, reminding him that he had not abused his parole thus far, but the Castellan had him bound and placed in a secure cell.

“When I saw there was no help for it, I said to him in the presence of his attendants: ‘Secure me well and guard me well, for I shall certainly escape.’ So they took me away and shut me up with wonderful precautions.

“Thereupon I began to think out the plan I must adopt. I set to work to examine how the cell was situated; and when I thought I perceived a way out, I began to consider how I could descend from that great height; so having taken the sheets which I had torn into strips and fastened together, I tried to figure how much would enable me to descend.

“Having reckoned up what was necessary, I secured a pair of pinchers, which I took from a Savoyard, who was one of the watchmen. This man had charge of the tubs and cisterns; he was also a carpenter; and since he had several pairs of pinchers, one of them very heavy and large, I abstracted them and hid them inside that mattress of mine.

“When the time came, I began to test the nails which held together the iron bands of the door; since the door was a double one, I could not see the riveting of these nails, so that only with great labor did I manage to extract one. However, I succeeded at last. Then I proceeded to think how I could prevent the

guards from seeing it. I prepared a little wax with a few scrapings of rusty iron, so that it was exactly the same color as the nail-head; with this I imitated the latter in the iron band; and one after another as I extracted the nails, I counterfeited them in wax. The iron bands were left attached at top and bottom by some of the real nails, but these were cut short before being put back, and lightly replaced, so that they just held the metal in place.

"This work I accomplished with the greatest difficulty, because the Castellan dreamed every night that I had escaped, and consequently sent to inspect my cell from hour to hour; and the man who came had both the name and manners of a constable. He always brought with him a soldier named Giovanni, and this Giovanni never came to my cell that he did not utter some insult. He examined the bands and walls with great care every time, and I would say to him: 'Watch me well, for I surely mean to escape.' This caused the keenest enmity between us; in such measure that I replaced my tools with great care in my mattress.

"One feast-day evening, the Castellan was very unwell; his delusions had increased, for he repeated that he was a bat, and if they should hear Benvenuto had flown away, they must let him pursue me, for he could fly much better at night than I could, adding: 'Benvenuto is a counterfeit bat and I am a real bat; since he has been given into my charge, leave it to me, for I shall certainly catch him.'

"Having resolved upon a feast-day evening to escape at all hazards, I first most devoutly made a prayer to God, imploring his Divine Majesty that he would defend and assist me in so perilous an under-

taking; then I drew out all the things I wished to use, and labored with them all that night.

"When I had come to two hours before daybreak, I removed the iron bands, with great difficulty, because the wooden panel and the bolt offered such resistance that I could not open the door. I had to cut away the wood. Finally, however, I opened it, and shouldering the strips I had wound up on reels, I emerged and went toward a closet. Seeing from within two tiles on the roof, I immediately leaped on to them.

"I was clad in a white doublet and a pair of white stockings; likewise a pair of white buskins in which I had placed my dagger. Taking one end of my strips, I attached it to a piece of ancient tile, built into the keep, which by chance jutted out about four fingers. The strip was arranged after the fashion of a stirrup. When I had made it fast, looking upward, I said: 'Lord God! Aid my right, for I am in the right as thou knowest, and because I am helping myself.'

"Letting myself go gradually, holding my weight by the strength of my arms, I reached the ground. There was no moonlight, but there was a fine brightness. When I was on the earth, I looked up at the great height I had descended so courageously, and went joyfully away thinking I was free.

"This, however, was not the case, for the Castellan had had two high walls built on that side which served him for a stable and chicken-house; this place was shut by two heavy outside bolts.

"When I saw that I could not escape from this place, it put me into great distress.

"While I was pacing back and forth, thinking over my predicament, my foot struck against a long beam hidden under the straw. Raising this with great

difficulty to the wall, I pulled myself up to the top. This had a sharp edge so I could not draw up the beam; I therefore took a piece of my remaining strip, and having bound it to the beam, I descended this wall, which caused me great labor and tired me very much; moreover, I had torn the skin off the palms of my hands, which were bleeding. So I was obliged to rest.

"When it seemed that my strength was returned, I leaped on to the last rampart of the outer walls which look toward Prati. Just as I had arranged my strip around a battlement after the same method employed for the greater height, I discovered behind me one of the sentinels on watch.

"Seeing that my design was imperilled, and myself in danger of my life, I prepared to face him—who, when he saw my determined spirit, and that I was coming toward him weapon in hand, quickened his step in retreat.

"Having gotten some distance from my strip, I turned back; and though I saw another guard, he may not have wished to see me.

"Reaching the strip, I let myself go; but, whether fancying I was near the ground I had released my hands to jump, or whether my hands were really tired out and unable to resist the strain—I fell, struck my head, and remained unconscious for over an hour and a half.

"Then, as day began to break, that slight freshness that comes an hour before sunrise caused me to revive; but I was still out of my senses, and thought my head had been cut off.

"Little by little my powers came back; I perceived I was outside the Castello, and suddenly I remembered everything. Feeling first the shock to my head,

I put up my hands and took them away all covered with blood; then having made a careful examination, I decided I had received no severe injury. But when I tried to rise, I found I had broken my right leg three fingers' distance above the heel.

"Even this did not dismay me. I dragged out my dagger in its sheath—this latter had an end with a heavy, hard ball and this had been the cause of my disaster; throwing away the sheath, I cut off a piece of my remaining strip, and bound the leg together as best I could. Then I crawled along, dagger in hand, toward the city gate.

"I reached the gate. It was closed. However, seeing a stone exactly beneath it, which seemed not firm, I tried to pull it away. Laying hold of it, it presently gave, and I drew it out. Through this hole I entered the city, it having been more than five hundred paces in a straight line from where I fell to this gate.

"When I was inside Rome, some mastiff dogs threw themselves on me and bit me severely; upon whom, when they returned many times to plague me, I drew my dagger, and wounded one of them so severely that he howled loudly, and the others, as is their nature, ran after him. So I crawled on toward the Church of Traspontina.

"Meeting a water-carrier who had his donkey laden with buckets of water, I called him and besought him to take me up the stairway."

The sight of some gold at once convinced this water-carrier that Cellini was a fit subject for his help; he accepted his story of an accident in an affair of gallantry, took the wounded man on his own back, and carried him up the flight of steps to another street. Here the fugitive crawled on to the house of a powerful

friend, who took him in, cared for him, and interceded with the Pope for him. In spite of all, the luckless artist was handed back to his obdurate enemy and underwent more weary months of imprisonment, being finally ransomed by a heavy payment.

Whatever opinion one may get of Master Benvenuto's morality from his own story, one feels he had earned his liberty.

CHAPTER III

A GREAT NOVELIST AMONG THE CORSAIRS

ON the 26th day of September, 1575, a Spanish galley was proceeding westward on the Mediterranean, impelled by both sails and oars. She was a low, broad, one-decked craft at whose masthead flew a banner with the royal arms of Castile and Leon, while on her queerly shaped triangular sails was blazoned in brilliant red a figure of the rising sun in emblem of her name, *el Sol*.

Besides the crew, and the rowers chained to their benches, she bore as passengers a number of Spanish officers who had served in the war against the Turks and were now returning for a visit to their native land after an absence of several years. Among these was a young man named Miguel de Cervantes—who was, when nearly sixty years old, to give the world one of its great books in “Don Quixote.” He had joined the army at the age of twenty-three with a reputation as one of the most promising young poets of Spain. That he was made of sterner stuff than many poets, had been shown at the battle of Lepanto the next year (October 7, 1571) when the combined forces of the Pope, the Venetians, and Spaniards almost annihilated the Turkish fleet; for being violently ill with fever, his captain and comrades urged him to remain below as the fleets closed; whereat he broke out: “Gentlemen, upon all occasions up to this day, I have served his Majesty as a good soldier, and now I will

not do less, though I confess I am ill of fever; it is better to fall in the service of God and his Majesty, and so to die, than to retire to a place of shelter; I must entreat of the captain, therefore, to place me in the most exposed post, for there I shall be till I fall." His commander could not resist this stout-hearted appeal: he was sent with twelve soldiers to the bow—and in the fight that followed, his galley slew five hundred Turks, including the Governor of Alexandria, and captured the royal Egyptian standard. Cervantes himself received three arquebus wounds, one leaving him with a maimed left hand for the rest of his life.

He was now eagerly looking forward to a sight of his own land which he had left five years previously, the more ardently since the galley had passed the Island of Sardinia and covered half the distance from Naples to Barcelona; and while his brother Rodrigo and the distinguished officers of the company talked over the past campaigns and the rumors of coming service, the young poet began to dream again of his university days at Salamanca, of the pastoral poems and sonnets which had first won him reputation. He carried with him letters from Don John and Don Carlos, Viceroy of Sicily, commending him to the King in the highest terms as one worthy of promotion; but this flattering prospect paled beside the youthful thrills with which he remembered he had haunted the theatre, wondering if his passion for the drama would some day enable him to see his own characters and ideas upon the stage.

He gazed dreamily off southward, over the blue expanse of sea, whose eager leaps before the fresh breeze made him think with a pang of those joyous young

hopes that had been swept aside by the stormy realities of war. Surely that was what he was meant to do in the world, instead of devoting his energies to killing his fellow men, even if these were Turks and infidels. And then with the writer's natural habit of turning even his most harrowing experiences to account, he began to revolve in his mind a drama he had conceived, the tragic story of that remnant of besieged Numantians, who, rather than surrender to the conquering Romans, applied the torch, slaughtered each other, and perished with their treasure and city in one vast holocaust of flames.

Suddenly, his inward gazing eye was attracted by a black speck on the horizon. He watched it curiously. As it grew larger, his soldier's instinct became aroused. Quietly calling the captain's attention, they stood staring at the tiny spot which gradually resolved itself into three.

In a moment a shout arose from a sailor forward. "The Moors! The Moors!" Instantly there was a rush to arms. Every man on board knew the meaning of that dreaded cry to mariners off the Algerian coast. Flight was impossible, as the wind favored the enemy, who also had more rowers and swifter ships.

The three corsair vessels approached rapidly. One in particular, a long, slim, greyhound-shaped galley with twenty-two oars, sped ahead of its comrades and seemed to leap toward *el Sol* like an eager hound that closes in on a buck.

There was a hot skirmish as the corsairs shot alongside and boarded—which Cervantes afterward described minutely in the Fifth Book of his "Galatea."

But in spite of valiant resistance, there was no chance against such overwhelming odds. The Span-

iards knew that the corsairs reaped their harvest of the sea in the form of captives, and that they would not be killed at first, but held for ransom; so like experienced campaigners they finally surrendered.

All were made slaves and carried back to Algiers, Cervantes falling to the share of Dali Mami, the Greek renegade who commanded the largest galley.

His precious and hard-won letters of commendation now served him an evil turn. Finding these messages from great noblemen to the King, speaking so highly of their bearer, Dali Mami concluded he had a prize indeed. Cervantes was loaded with chains and treated with great harshness, to make him either urge his family to ransom him, or prevail on him to turn renegade.

Rejecting all such suggestions, the poet turned his lively imagination to planning a method of escape. The moment the rigors of his captivity were relaxed—as a sort of object-lesson of the sweets of freedom—he combined with a number of his comrades, and presently found a Moor who agreed for a large reward to guide them two hundred and fifty miles westward to Oran, where a hundred-mile sail would land them on the coast of Spain.

Buoyantly they set out. But the treacherous guide left them in the desert the first day. With no choice but starvation, the party was forced to return to Algiers, where all were again fettered and watched more closely than ever.

In spite of this, Cervantes made three other similar attempts, all of which failed. Then, in 1576, he sent word by some redeemed prisoners to his father. The latter mortgaged everything he possessed and sent the sum to the prisoner; but Dali Mami refused to

consider such a pitiful amount for so distinguished a personage, so the generous Miguel used it to purchase the freedom of his brother Rodrigo.

He did not lose heart for a moment, however. When Rodrigo left in the summer of 1577, he promised to despatch an armed vessel, which was to approach at a signal and take off the fugitives. Carrying with him urgent messages from several of the imprisoned noblemen to the Governors of Valencia and Majorca, Rodrigo departed, and his indefatigable brother at once resumed the plan which was to make the scheme effective when the time came.

There was a large estate east of the city belonging to the Alcalde Azan, a Greek renegade who had risen to importance. This man had as gardener a Christian slave named Juan. Cervantes had become intimate with the latter, and finding that he too pined for his native Navarre, had induced him to join in a daring enterprise.

One by one, fifteen of the prisoners had been spirited away and concealed by Juan in a cave in the wildest part of this estate, this apparently impossible task being facilitated by the great number of captives. Juan stood guard, warning the fugitives of the approach of any danger; and a prisoner known as *el Dorador* (the gilder), who had once embraced Mohammedanism but returned to his faith, was employed by Cervantes to purchase food and convey it secretly to the gloomy cavern. For more than six months this extraordinary underground colony had thus been built up and supported.

Finally, just two years after his capture, feeling that the time had come, Cervantes contrived to send a message to the brigantine waiting at Minorca, fled

from his master's house in disguise, and joined the anxious group in the cave.

Here, in dampness, darkness, and terrible suspense, they waited day after day, upheld by the courage of their leader, who stoutly assured them that for liberty and honor "we ought to risk life itself."

Meanwhile the rescuing vessel had sailed promptly, and reached the Algerian shore a week after the flight of Cervantes. The captain crept in at dusk to the point nearest to the garden, and sent a boat ashore to inform the waiting fugitives that he was ready for them. But at this critical juncture, a fishing-boat came along; the Moors aboard saw the strange brigantine and the rowboat; and they raised such an alarm that the messengers threw themselves into the sea and swam back to their vessel, which was forced to retreat.

A second attempt met with even worse luck, the party being captured by the Algerians.

All this time the luckless fugitives could only maintain their subterranean vigil, in an anxiety that ever deepened as day succeeded day with no word from their rescuers. Their hopes were shortly to receive a rude awakening.

The gilder chose this auspicious time for a third change of his faith. Having some natural doubts as to the value his Mohammedan masters might set upon so habitual a convert as himself, he presented himself before the dreaded Dey (the Turkish Governor) and betrayed the whole conspiracy.

In delight at the prospect of thus "picking up" such valuable property, the Dey sent out a strong force of cavalry and foot-soldiers. Led by the traitor, these surrounded the cavern and seized the thunder-struck band.

Cervantes coolly took all the blame of the enterprise upon himself. Handcuffed, he was marched on foot to the Dey's palace, through a mob which heaped insults and indignities on him, while his comrades were taken to the chief jail, "the Baths," where there were already a couple of thousand prisoners.

The Dey was notorious even among those fierce people for his bloody-minded cruelty. Hardly a day passed that some "Christian dog" was not hanged, impaled, mutilated, or tortured by his orders. The captives had heard with shudders the tale of two Spaniards, some years previously, who had been taken while endeavoring to escape, and had perished by the bastinado at the hands of this wanton monster himself.

He brought all the terrors of his reputation and torture-chambers to bear upon Cervantes in the effort to make him say that Olivar, the crown agent for the redemption of captives, had aided his attempt. The Spaniard calmly asserted that he alone was responsible. At length, unable to break down his firmness, the Dey appropriated the captives for himself, delivered poor Juan up to the Alcalde for death, and had Cervantes fettered and closely guarded in his own royal "bath."

While his brutal cruelty was not lessened through the fact that Dali Mami's protests forced him to turn a windfall into a speculation by purchasing the "lame Spaniard" for a thousand dollars, this probably saved the future author of "Don Quixote"; for he thus became too valuable to kill outright. But no such influence protected many another prisoner, and the daily horrors which made the Turks themselves call the Dey "a butcher of the human race" were a constant object-lesson to Cervantes.

They had no effect save to harden his resolution to escape. Indeed, they were a constant reminder that his turn might come at any moment in some fit of passion on his master's part. He bribed an attendant to carry a letter to Don Martin de Cordova, Governor of Oran, begging to have spies sent with whom he could plan the flight of himself and three others.

The messenger reached Oran safely; but before he could deliver his appeal, he was seized and the letter was found on his person.

The Dey's reply to this was to impale the messenger alive and to sentence Cervantes to two thousand lashes. But though three other prisoners who had been taken on their way to Oran were also impaled, the punishment of the "lame Spaniard" was for some reason not carried out.

With this fate hanging over him, the undaunted poet began a fresh conspiracy. Through a renegade named Giron, who professed penitence for his lapse from Christianity, he arranged with two Venetian merchants of Algiers for the purchase of an armed, twelve-oared brigantine; sixty captives were admitted to the venture; every detail of the desperate attempt was perfected—when at the very moment of departure a wretch named De Paz betrayed his comrades to the Governor. The latter decided to take the party red-handed, so he allowed matters to proceed.

Cervantes had actually gotten away from the prison to a friend's house when one of the Venetians came to him in great alarm, declaring that the Governor knew all and urging the other to hasten aboard without waiting for his friends. Cervantes refused this as dishonorable and remained in hiding several days. Then a proclamation appeared, forbidding any one to con-

ceal the fugitive under pain of death. Rather than jeopardize his friend, the poet gave himself up again.

The Dey's greeting was to have his hands tied behind him and a rope put around his neck. In the face of these ominous proceedings, Cervantes boldly proclaimed that he alone was as before the originator and leader of the enterprise.

His indomitable courage seems to have awed his despotic master. In fact, the latter had begun to have a superstitious feeling about this amazing "lame Spaniard," and was in constant fear that his incredible boldness and persistence would succeed in carrying out the general uprising of the Christian captives in Algiers, which the Moors constantly dreaded. The truth was that Cervantes had long worked at this very plot. There were twenty-five thousand such captives in the city, largely men-at-arms, and it was an alluring idea to a soldier that he might thus be able to capture by stratagem for his Emperor a stronghold which had repeatedly resisted the assaults of Spanish forces. Moreover, his captors well knew by this time that he would hesitate at no audacity. The Dey more than once remarked that as long as the "lame soldier" was well guarded, he could feel easy about his city, slaves, and ships.

The extra precautions taken because of these apprehensions made Cervantes's progress very slow in this ambitious and far-reaching conspiracy.

All this time his parents and brothers in Spain had been working to raise money for his ransom. Themselves impoverished by the first payment, they sought aid of the King, but it was not till 1580 that the monarch graciously permitted the family to export ten thousand ducats' worth of merchandise and apply the prof-

its to the ransom. This venture, by continued ill luck, produced only sixty ducats, which, with three hundred more, raised by the mother and sister, was given to the "fathers of redemption" then setting out for Algiers.

The Dey refused this, demanding double what he paid for the captive. He was sailing for Constantinople, his term of office having expired, and Cervantes was actually taken on board, in chains, to be carried away, when the good Padre Gil managed to strike a bargain with his master. Paying half the latter's demands, the doughty soldier-poet was at last set free after a captivity of nearly five years.

CHAPTER IV

JOHN FOXE, GUNNER OF THE *THREE HALF MOONS*

AT the very time when Cervantes was indefatigably making a fresh plan as soon as each scheme of escape miscarried, an Englishman was going through a similar but more fortunate experience fifteen hundred miles to the east, in the city of Alexandria.

Here is the old narrative of the “worthy enterprise” of this stout-hearted gunner, written by one Anthony Munday—who was at Rome when John Foxe came thither in triumph:

“Among our merchants here in England it is a common voyage to traffic into Spain. Whereunto a ship, being called the *Three Half Moons*, manned with eight-and-thirty men, and well fenced (furnished) with munitions the better to encounter their enemies withal; having wind and tide, set forth from Portsmouth in the year 1563, and bent her journey toward Seville, a city in Spain: intending there to traffic with them.

“And falling near the straits of Gibraltar, they perceived themselves to be beset round about with eight galleys of the Turks, in such wise that there was no way for them to fly or escape away; but that they must yield or be sunk.

“Which the owner perceiving, manfully encouraged his company, exhorting them ‘valiantly to show their manhood, requesting them also not to faint on seeing such a heap of their enemies ready to devour them’; putting them likewise in mind of ‘the old and ancient worthiness of their countrymen: who in the hardest

extremities have always most prevailed; and gone away conquerors, yea, and where it hath been almost impossible. Such,' quoth he, 'hath been the valiantness of our countrymen; and such hath been the power of our God.'

"With such other like encouragements they fell all on their knees, making their prayers briefly unto God; and being all risen up again perceived their enemies by their signs and defiance bent to the spoil, whose mercy was nothing else but cruelty. Whereupon every man took him to his weapon.

"Then stood up Grove, the master, being a comely man, with his sword and target; holding them up in defiance against his enemies. So likewise stood up the owner, the master's mate, boatswain, purser, and every man well appointed. Now likewise sounded up the drums, trumpets, and flutes, which would have encouraged any man, had he never so little heart or courage in him.

"Then taketh him to his charge John Foxe, the gunner, disposing his pieces to the best effect, and sending his bullets toward the Turks; who likewise bestowed their pieces thrice as fast toward the Christians. But shortly they drew near, so that the bowmen fell to their charge in sending forth their arrows so thick amongst the galleys, and also in doubling their shot so sure that there were twice as many of the Turks slain as of the Christians.

"But the Turks discharged twice as fast, until the ship was sore stricken under water. Which the Turks perceiving, made the more haste to come aboard, but ere they could do so many a one bought it dearly with the loss of his life.

"Yet was all in vain, and boarded they were; but

the enemy found so hot a skirmish that it had been better had they not meddled with the feast. For the Englishmen showed themselves men, indeed, in working with their brown bills and halberds, and the company stood to it so lustily that the Turks were half dismayed. But chiefly the boatswain showed himself valiant above the rest, for he went among the Turks like a wood (mad) lion, so that none of them either could or durst stand in his face; till at the last there came a shot which broke his whistle asunder and smote him in the breast so that he fell down, encouraging them to win praise by death rather than live captives.

“This they intended, but the number of the Turks was so great that they were overpressed and could not wield their weapons. By reason of this they must needs be taken.

“Then would it have grieved any hard heart to see these infidels so violently entreating the Christians who must needs go to the galleys. And they were no sooner in than their garments were pulled over their ears and torn from their backs, and they were set to the oars.

“Nigh to the city of Alexandria there is a harbor with strong walls where the Turks do bring their galleys in the winter season and lay them up against the springtime. In which road there is a prison wherein captives are put, every prisoner being grievously laden with irons on his legs. In this prison were these Christians thrown and fast guarded all winter. The master and owner were redeemed, but the rest abided still, with ill usage and miserably starved—saving John Foxe, who being skilful as a barber, helped his fare now and then with a good meal.

“At last he had leave to go in and out at his pleasure, paying a certain stipend to the keeper and wearing a lock about his leg. This liberty six more had, by long imprisonment not being feared or suspected.”

In the year 1577, in the winter, the galleys came to their accustomed harbor, and were discharged of their masts, sails, and other furniture. There then remained in the prison two hundred and sixty-eight Christians of sixteen nations. John Foxe having been there thirteen or fourteen years, continually pondering on escape, took a great heart unto him.

Not far from the harbor there was a victualling house kept by one Peter Unticaro, a Spaniard born and a Christian, who had been prisoner above thirty years, and was not suspected of any conspiracy. John Foxe opened to Unticaro the device he would put in practice, and made one more acquainted with their plan. These three debated seven weeks and added another five, determining then to accomplish their purpose three days later.

The last day of December, John Foxe explained the project to the rest of the prisoners and persuaded them without much ado to join in the enterprise. He gave them a number of files he had gathered together, charging every man to be free of his irons by eight o'clock the next night.

The following night Foxe and his six companions came to the house of Unticaro and passed the time in mirth, for fear of suspicion, till the hour came.

In the meantime the other seven had provided them of such weapons as they could get in that house; John Foxe took an old rusty sword without hilt or pommel, bending the hand end to serve as a pommel.

“The keeper now being come into the house and per-

ceiving no light nor hearing any noise, straightway suspected the matter. As he went backward, John Foxe stepped forth.

“‘Oh, Foxe!’ said he, ‘what have I deserved of thee that thou shouldst seek my death?’”

“‘Thou villain,’ quoth Foxe, ‘hast been a blood-sucker of many a Christian’s blood, and now thou shalt know what thou hast deserved at my hands.’”

“Whereupon he lifted up his sword of ten years’ rust and struck him a blow that clave his head asunder, so that he fell stark dead to the ground.

The rest came forth and marched toward the gate of the harbor, entering softly.

Six wardens were on guard.

“Who goes there?” asked one.

Quoth Foxe and his company: “All friends.”

But when they were all within, this proved contrary, for said Foxe: “My masters, here is less than man to man: look you play your parts.”

They entered the jailer’s lodge, where they found the keys by his bedside and better weapons. In this chamber was a chest with a rich treasure all in ducats, of which Peter Unticaro and two others stuffed themselves as full as they could between their shirts and their skins. But John Foxe would not touch it, saying it was liberty that he sought.

Now Foxe opened the gates and doors and called forth all the prisoners, whom he set to ramming up the gate, and dressing the best galley with masts, sails, oars, and such furnishings.

At the prison were some warders whom Foxe and his company slew; meanwhile eight more Turks perceived them and got on top of the prison. There was a hot skirmish. John Foxe was thrice shot through his

apparel and not hurt; but Unticaro and the other two who had armed themselves with ducats were slain, not being able to wield themselves with the weight of the treasure, also divers more Christians were hurt.

One Turk, thrust through, fell off and gave the alarm. The city and castle next to the road were aroused, so there was now but one way of escape and that looked impossible.

The harbor side was filled with the fugitives, every man setting his hand to some preparation, but most keeping their enemy from the wall. Shortly the galley was ready, every man leaped aboard, and they hoisted the sails lustily.

“Once out from the shore, the two castles had full power on the galley, cannon on both sides and the vessel in between. There is no man but would think it must needs be sunk.

“The shots went thundering about their ears, yet were they not once touched by five and forty balls fired from the castles. Quickly they passed out of reach.”

The Turks rushed to the waterside like swarms of bees to set out in pursuit; but everything was in confusion, there was no leader, and before they could get a single galley properly ready, the fugitives were at a safe distance off the coast.

They met with storms, and were in great misery for twenty-eight days through scarcity of food, so that there died eight persons. But it so fell out that on the twenty-ninth day after leaving Alexandria, they reached the island of Candia and landed, where they were made much of by the abbot and monks.

Sailing along the coast, and just missing a pursuing fleet of seven Turkish galleys, they arrived at Taranto, sold their galley, and divided the proceeds.

The worthy gunner went on to Rome and was rewarded by the Pope; was received and pensioned by the King of Spain, and finally came back to his own country in 1579.

“Being come into England, he went into the court and showed all his travel to the council; who considering that he had spent and lost a great part of his youth in thraldom and bondage, extended to him their liberality to help maintain him now in age—to their right honor and to the encouragement of all true-hearted Christians.”

CHAPTER V

THE MOST FAMOUS OF ALL ESCAPES

THERE is probably no escape from imprisonment on record so noted as that of Baron Trenck.

Trenck was a young, handsome, wealthy Prussian nobleman, who entered the body-guard of Emperor Frederick II when only sixteen. This picked cavalry squadron, magnificently uniformed and equipped, was the most dashing and aristocratic body of troops in Europe, selected individually by the King himself, at once guards, soldiers, instructors, and courtiers.

In three weeks young Trenck was made a cornet. He served with distinction for two years in the war between Prussia and Austria, though by his own confession he did not always allow duty to interfere with his pleasures.

Suddenly in 1746 he was arrested on the charge of treason. What his real offense was has always remained obscure; perhaps, as stated, he lifted his bold eyes to the monarch's sister; but it is certain that the Emperor's friendship changed to relentless severity.

Without examination or trial, he was conducted by fifty hussars to the fortress of Glatz, in the mountains of Silesia. His letter to the King brought no reply, and after five months' imprisonment, he heard that peace had been declared and that his place in the body-guard had been filled. Not only was there no

prospect of release, but he feared that any day might bring the order for his execution. He resolved to try for freedom.

Trenck's first effort to escape was betrayed by the fellow prisoner with whom he had conspired, and in consequence his former comfortable treatment was altered; instead of having the freedom of the citadel and entertaining the officers, he was shut up in a small cell and closely guarded.

The tale is told by himself:

"I was now left to myself, surveyed my destiny on the dark side, and thought only of the means to fly or perish; for the narrow prison began at last to be insupportable to my impatient temper. My first project was this: My window was in the alarm fort, about fifteen fathoms high, and opposite the side of the town, therefore I could not escape from the citadel without first seeking a refuge in the town; this was already assured me, by means of an officer, in the house of an honest soapmaker. With my penknife, which was notched, I cut through three very thick iron bars, but as this took up too much time, and there were no less than eight of them that opposed my passage in front of the window, an officer conveyed a file to me, with which I was obliged to work very cautiously for fear of being heard by the sentry.

"As soon as this was finished, I slit my leather portmanteau into strings, knotted them together, took my bedclothes to my assistance, and let myself fortunately down from this astonishing height.

"It rained bitterly. The night being dark and gloomy, everything was favorable; but I was under the disagreeable necessity of wading through the sink of the common sewer before I could reach the town.

This I had not foreseen. Although I was not above my knees, it was impossible for me to proceed. I did all I could, but stuck so fast that at last I lost all strength, and called to the sentry who was on the alarm fort: 'Tell the commandant that Trenck is sticking in the mud.' To increase my misfortune, General Fouquet was at that time commandant at Glatz; he was a well-known misanthrope, who had fought a duel with my father when a captain, and had been wounded by him. On these accounts he was a bitter enemy to the name of Trenck, and took every opportunity of making me feel the effects of his animosity. He suffered me to remain in this condition as a public spectacle for the garrison till noon, then ordered me to be taken out and shut in my prison again, but would not allow me any water the whole day to wash myself. The figure I made was truly pitiable. My long hair had, in the struggle, fallen into the mire, and nothing could be more obnoxious than my situation, till I was granted a couple of prisoners, who cleaned me.

"My confinement was now increased, with as much rigor as possible. I had, however, eighty louis d'ors in my pocket, which were not taken from me, and from those I found essential service afterward.

"But presently all my passions began to storm, and my young blood mutinied against any reasonable resolve; I saw all hopes vanish; looked upon myself as the most unfortunate creature upon earth, and my monarch as an implacable judge, now further provoked by my unsuccessful efforts to regain my liberty.

"Scarce eight days were passed since my last unsuccessful attempt to fly, when a circumstance occurred that would seem improbable in history if I did

not write it myself, and publicly make it known, at a time when I, the chief actor, am still living, and could call upon all Glatz, the whole Prussian garrison, as eye, ear, and local witnesses.

“The town major, Doo, came into my prison, accompanied by the adjutant and officer of the guard; he visited every corner, and entered into conversation with me, in which he styled my attempt to escape a *double crime*, that would rouse the monarch’s wrath against me. The word crime had already made my blood boil. He talked of patience. I asked: ‘How long has the king sentenced me?’ He answered: ‘A traitor to his country, who corresponds with the enemy, has no other appointed time than the King’s will.’ At that instant I tore from his side his sword, on which I had already fixed my eye, flew out of the door, threw the terrified sentry down-stairs, found at the door below the guard, which had at that moment been called out for the relief, ran upon them sword in hand—every one started with surprise and made way. I laid about me right and left, wounded four men, ran through the middle of them, sprang upon the breastwork of the principal rampart, and directly down from the astonishing height, without the smallest damage—even kept my sword in hand. I got as luckily over the second lower rampart; no pieces were loaded, nobody would leap after me, and there was no other way to pursue me than by going through the town and out of the gate, so that I had near a mile and a half start. In a narrow passage in one of the outworks a sentry ran toward me and opposed my flight; in an instant his firelock and bayonet were parried, and he received a cut on the face; the other sentries of the outworks attacked me in the rear; I

sprang with all haste over the palisades, but, unfortunately, one of my feet remained sticking betwixt them; I was wounded by a bayonet in the upper lip, and held fast by the leg until the others came to help. They sent me back to my prison, bruised, beaten, and for having defended myself like a desperate man.

“My hopes had now an end; my confinement was more rigid, and a non-commissioned officer and two men were placed in my room, which was also strictly guarded on the outside. I was shockingly treated, my right ankle was disjoined, I spat blood, and my wound was not healed for a month.

“I soon found (for I was ever on the watch) new opportunity for a fresh enterprise. I studied the disposition of the men who guarded me; I did not want for money; with that, and excited compassion, anything may be done with a discontented Prussian soldier. In a short time I had a party of thirty-two men on my side, who were ready at a wink to undertake everything; none, except two or three, knew of each other's engagement, consequently they could not all be discovered; and the non-commissioned officer, Nicholai, was my chosen conductor.

“The garrison of the citadel consisted at that time only of one hundred and twenty men from the different regiments that were divided in the county of Glatz. Four officers relieved each other alternately at the main guard, three of whom were in my secret; everything was prepared; cartridges, pistols, and a sword were concealed in a hole in my jail. We meant to release all the other prisoners, and march with flying colors to Bohemia, but an Austrian deserter, in whom Nicholai confided, discovered the whole affair, and the Governor sent his adjutant to the citadel, with orders for the

officer of the guard immediately to confine Nicholai, and with his men to surround the barracks.

"The storm which had been for some time gathering around me began now to rage with violence.

"All possible rigors of confinement ensued, excepting that I was not put in irons; for, in Prussia, no gentleman or officer can be chained unless he be delivered into the hands of the executioner for some infamous crime.

"At a time when every expectation began to vanish, and all probability to escape seemed vain, the following wonderful circumstances occurred:

"Lieutenant Bach, by birth a Dane, who every four days mounted guard upon me, was the terror of the whole garrison—a quarrelsome fellow, who had fought with and marked all his comrades. On this account he had been changed into two different regiments, and at last, by way of punishment, put into one of the battalions garrisoned at Glatz. This man was sitting on my bed, and telling me that the day before he had wounded Lieutenant Schell in the arm. I said to him jestingly: 'If I were free, I think you would scarce wound me.' Immediately his blood flew to his face, and in a hurry we made a pair of foils from an old split door which served me as a table; I touched him on the breast. He ran in a passion out-of-doors—but how I was astonished to see him return with two musketeer's sabres under his coat! He offered me one, and said: 'Now, boaster, show what thou canst do.' I protested against it, wished to convince him of the danger—it was in vain; he attacked me, and I wounded him in the right arm. He instantly flung down the sword, threw himself round my neck, kissed me, and remained crying in that position. At length with an odd kind

of joy visible in his face, he said: 'Friend! thou art my master, and thou shalt obtain thy liberty through me, as sure as my name is Bach.' We bound up the wound in his arm, which, though not mortal, was nevertheless deep. He went away, sent for a surgeon, who dressed him properly, and at night he came to me again.

"Here he suggested that there was no way of escaping unless the officer of the guard accompanied me; he himself would willingly lay down his life for me, but he could not perform any villainous deed, or desert his guard. However, he gave me his word of honor to find me a man in a few days, and to assist as much as possible. At night he returned again, and brought Lieutenant Schell with him. The first word was: 'Here's thy man.' Schell embraced me, pledged his faith, the bargain was concluded, and I was assured of my liberty.

"We agreed that at his next guard everything should be settled, and our design put into execution the ensuing one. He mounted every fourth day, consequently in eight days everything was to be effectuated.

"But it now began to be suspected that the officers were too familiar and intimate with me; and an order was given for my door to be always locked, and my victuals delivered to me through a window; the major kept the key, and all were forbidden to eat with me on pain of being cashiered. The officers, however, got a false key made, and generally spent the best part of the day and night with me.

"Opposite to my room, in the prison, was a Captain Damnitz. This man had deserted from the Prussian service with the company's money, and was made a captain of his cousin's regiment in Austria; but in the

campaign of 1744 he acted as a spy, and was taken in the dress of a peasant by the Prussian army; he was deservedly condemned to be hanged, but received his pardon, at the intercession of the Swedish volunteers who were at that time with the army, and was sentenced, *cum infamia*, to remain in Glatz the remainder of his life.

“This worthless man, who, through interest, not only obtained his freedom after two years’ imprisonment but was even made lieutenant-colonel of his cousin’s regiment, was at that time secretly employed by the town major as a spy over the other prisoners, and had given information that, notwithstanding the strict orders to the contrary, the officer of the guard passed most of his time with me.

“On the 24th of December Schell was upon guard; he came immediately to my room, and stayed some time with me; everything was this day to be settled how we were to make our escape next time he mounted.

“Lieutenant Schroder was that day invited to dine with the commanding officer, and heard accidentally from the adjutant that he had orders to relieve Lieutenant Schell, and immediately to put him under arrest. Schroder, who was in the secret, instantly conjectured that we were betrayed; although, as I afterward understood, it was owing to nothing else but the spy Damnitz having given notice that Schell was in my room.

“Schroder ran terrified to Schell in the citadel, crying: ‘Friend! save thyself, all is discovered, thou wilt be immediately confined.’

“Schell himself might have escaped without the least danger, for Schroder proposed to take horse directly and ride toward Bohemia. But the gallant man,

instead of following his salutary advice, entered my prison, drew a non-commissioned officer's sabre from below his coat, and said: 'Friend, we are betrayed, follow me, and do not let me fall alive into the hands of my enemies.' I wanted to speak to him—he seized me hastily by the hand, saying: 'Follow—there is not a moment to spare.' I instantly threw my coat on my shoulders, pulled on my boots, but had not even time to take my little concealed cash along with me.

"We went out, and he said to the sentry: 'Your prisoner is going with me into the officer's room, stay here.' We actually did go in, but immediately retired, unperceived, by a side door. My friend was planning to go with me under the arsenal to the covert-way, then get over the palisades, and save ourselves the best way we could.

"We had scarce gone a hundred paces when we were met by Major Quaadt and the adjutant. Schell started, stepped upon the rampart, and leaped over the parapet, which at that part was not very high. I followed, and sprang after him, without receiving any other injury but a slight hurt on my shoulder; my friend had the misfortune to dislocate his ankle, which gave him the most excruciating pain; he immediately drew his sword and entreated me to run him through the body and endeavor to save myself.

"He was a small, weak man; I took him in my arms, helped him over the palisades, aided him to get upon my back, and ran without knowing where. It is worthy of remark, how fortune favored us in so desperate an enterprise; the sun was then setting, and the air exceedingly cold, raw, and cloudy; nobody durst attempt to leap after us; the alarm was great—every one knew us—but before anybody could come from

the citadel into the town, and from thence through the gate to follow us, we had got at least half a league.

“The alarm cannons were fired, as in all cases of desertions, before we were one hundred paces distant; this terrified my friend still more, as he very well knew that there was seldom an instance of a deserter escaping who had not at least two hours’ start before the guns were fired, because all passages are immediately beset by peasants and hussars, who are particularly strict and watchful.

“We were not above five hundred yards distant from the fortifications before everything was in motion both behind and before us; we fled in daylight, and luckily escaped; for which I partly thank my presence of mind and the character I had established. Among the officers ordered to follow us was Lieutenant Bart, my friend, and Captain Zerbst, of Fouquet’s regiment, who always loved me with fraternal affection. We met him not far from the borders of Bohemia, where he called to me: ‘Brother, keep more to the left, and endeavor to gain yonder house which stands by itself, that is the border—the hussars are gone to the right!’ He moved sideways as if he had not observed us; we had not much to fear from the officers, they always assisted each other where they had it in their power.

“Scarce had I carried my friend three hundred paces till I set him down and looked about me; but the air was so thick that I could neither see the town nor the citadel; of course we ourselves were invisible. My presence of mind never left me a moment; death or liberty was my positive determination. I asked my friend Schell where we were. Where lay Bohemia. Where flowed the Neisse. The good man had not yet recovered himself enough for recollection, but begg-

that I would not leave him behind alive, and seemed to despair of all probability of escaping. After having solemnly promised that in case there was no other resource I would deliver him from the ignominious death of a gibbet, I endeavored to cheer up and encourage him by my own example and high spirits; he then looked around and recollected, observing that we were at no great distance from the field ports. I again asked: 'Where is the Neisse?' He pointed sideways. 'Friend,' said I, 'we have been seen moving toward the Bohemian mountains, where it will be impossible for us to pass, for there the cordon is beset, and the hussars and all our pursuers have taken that route.' I took him again upon my back, and carried him toward the Neisse; we now heard a dreadful noise in all the neighboring villages, and the boors who had surrounded the desertion cordon were running about and giving the alarm on all sides.

"The Neisse was but little frozen; I took my friend and conducted him as far as I could wade. In the deepest part, which was not quite three fathoms broad, he was obliged to hold fast by my hair, and in this manner we landed safe on the other side.

"Conceive how pleasant it must have been to swim on the 24th of December, and then to remain eighteen hours without shade or shelter, under the canopy of heaven! About seven o'clock in the evening every cloud had disappeared, and it grew moonlight and frosty. I had my friend to carry, therefore was warm, but fatigued; he, on the other hand, endured cold beside the pain of a dislocated ankle, which I endeavored in vain to reduce; danger and death were before my eyes at every step.

"As soon as we had reached the opposite shore of

the Neisse we were out of danger of the pursuit, for nobody looked for us on the road to Silesia. I walked a good mile and a half by the side of the river, but when we got to the first villages in our rear which bounded the alarm cordon and were by experience well known to Schell, we found by accident a small fishing-boat; we broke the lock, ferried over, and in a short time gained the mountains. There we set ourselves down upon the snow; our courage increased, and we held a council of what was further to be done. I cut a stick for Schell, with which he now and then helped himself forward on one leg, and let me rest a little; this was work of much difficulty, the snow being very deep and its surface exceeding hard.

"Thus passed the night, whilst we tumbled about and over our knees in snow, without making much way; the lofty mountains were here and there insurmountable; the day began to break, and we fancied ourselves near the borders, which were four German miles distant from Glatz; but to our great terror and surprise, we heard the Glatz clock strike. I now felt myself unable any longer to endure the extreme fatigue and cold; the pain of my friend's leg became almost insupportable. In this situation, and tortured by craving hunger, we thought it impossible to survive the day. After a long consultation, we arrived, in about an hour and a half, at a village which lay at the foot of the mountain. About three hundred yards on this side of the village stood two separate houses; therefore, we took the following resolution, which we immediately put into execution.

"We had both lost our hats in getting over the ramparts of Glatz; Schell, as an officer of the guard, had still his gorget and sash about him, which might pro

cure us some respect from the country people. I cut my finger, and besmeared my face, shirt, and coat with blood, like a man shockingly wounded, at the same time bound up my head. In this condition I carried Schell to the end of a thicket, not far from the houses, where he tied my hands behind my back, but in such a manner that I could easily disengage them, pretended to be in a great passion, beat about with his stick, and called for help. Two old peasants came running toward us. Schell immediately cried out: 'Run to the village, let the judge get a cart and horses ready in a moment—I have got the rascal—he has stabbed my horse, by which I have sprained my leg—however, I have slashed him—make haste—a cart—that he may be hanged before he dies.'

"Thus I suffered myself to be dragged into a room; one of the boors ran into the village. An old woman and a pretty young girl took compassion upon me, and brought us some bread and milk. But how was I astonished, when the old countryman called Schell by his name, and assured us that he knew we were the two deserters whom an officer came after the night before—for the latter had named us in the public house, and described our dress, with the whole story of our flight. This peasant knew Schell personally, for his son served in the same company, and had often spoken to him at Habelschwerd, when he was quartered there.

"Nothing now remained but an immediate resolution and presence of mind; I ran quickly into the stable, and Schell kept the old boor in the room. He was a very honest man, and even told us the way toward Bohemia; we were not above a mile and a half from Glatz, and had wandered backward and forward near

six miles in the mountains. The girl followed me; I found three horses in the stable, but no bridles; I besought her, in a piteous manner, to help me; she was moved, and immediately gave me two.

“I took the horses out, called to Schell—he appeared with his lame leg—I helped him mount—the old countryman cried and begged for his horses; but, fortunately, he had neither the courage nor the inclination to oppose us; for, defenseless as we were, he might at least have detained us with a pitchfork till the village was alarmed. We rode off without either saddles or hats, Schell in uniform, with his sash and gorget, and I in my red *garde du uniform*; but our hopes were nearly frustrated, for my horse would not stir from the place; as a good rider, however, I found means to make him go on. Schell rode first; but scarce were we a hundred paces distant, before we saw the inhabitants hastening out of the village; fortunately, for us, it was a holiday, every one was at church, and the peasant whom we had sent was obliged to call them out; it was about nine o’clock, and had they been at home we must have inevitably been lost. I was fatigued and Schell lame; we could not possibly have escaped.

“The road led directly to Wunschelburg; there was no way of getting through this town. Schell had been quartered there about a month before; everybody knew him, and our equipage, without either saddle or hat, looked nothing else but desertion. The horses however, went tolerably well, and we escaped safe although there were eighty infantry and twelve husars posted to take up deserters. We went round the town, through the suburbs, and as he knew the way to Bummorn, we arrived safe there about seven

o'clock. The joy we felt that day is not to be described.

"I was once more at liberty."

This adventure would seem enough for one person. But Trenck was captured again in May, 1754, and spent nearly *ten years* in the fortress of Magdeburg. Part of the time half-starved and desperately sick; loaded down with sixty-eight pounds of chains and fetters; in a stone cell with his own tombstone in the floor beneath his feet; in spite of all this, this man freed himself from his irons so that he could restore them when visited, cut through nine inches of oak planks, dug down under the foundations, tunnelled forty feet, carrying the sand by handfuls—only to be discovered when he emerged!

Again and again he attempted to burrow himself free, though for four years he was visited every fifteen minutes day and night.

Friends had arranged to have horses for him at a certain place on the 15th of each month for a year. While laboring naked in his tunnels one night, a great stone fell from the roof behind and blocked the passage. Fainting for lack of air, in the ghastly darkness, dreading discovery and loss of his frightful labor even if he got out alive, he managed to dig a hole in the bottom of the tunnel, drag the stone into it, and return to his cell—actually finding courage to restore the rubbish and make all look natural before the inspectors arrived.

Once all was nearly ruined by his tame mouse which made a noise gnawing a wooden platter and brought in the guards. Still Trenck persisted—only to fail time after time.

At length on the day before Christmas, 1763, the

King released him, banishing him from his dominions.

He travelled all over Europe; married a "young, handsome, and virtuous" Frenchwoman; had eleven children; and, after many more romantic adventures, joined the Jacobins in Paris and died on the guillotine in 1794.

CHAPTER VI

OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE INQUISITION

A YEAR after Baron Trenck was immured in the dungeon of Magdeburg, an almost equally celebrated character met a similar fate in Venice. This was Giovanni Casanova, brother of a distinguished painter, but himself preferring to "live on his wits"—which had been his chief inheritance from his actor parents.

His gay career was interrupted for a couple of years when he was about thirty. The officials of the church descended upon him as he was starting to an entertainment in all his finery, found in his possession forbidden books of magic, and promptly clapped him into a cell, beneath the roof of the ducal palace and just above the secret room of the Inquisition.

Torture and death were the probable future that confronted the prisoner when he was left alone in the gloomy cell, without a bed and with a ceiling too low to permit him to stand erect.

"I became like a raging madman, stamping, cursing, and uttering wild cries. After more than an hour of this furious exercise, seeing no one, not hearing the least sign which could have made me imagine that any one was aware of my fury, I stretched myself on the ground. . . . But my bitter grief and anger, and the hard floor on which I lay, did not prevent me from sleeping.

"The midnight bell woke me: I could not believe that I had really passed three hours without conscious-

ness of pain. Without moving, lying as I was on my left side, I stretched out my right hand for my handkerchief, which I remembered was there. Groping with my hand—heavens! suddenly it rested upon *another* hand, icy cold! Terror thrilled me from head to foot, and my hair rose. I had never in all my life known such an agony of fear, and would never have thought myself capable of it.

“Three or four minutes I passed, not only motionless, but bereft of thought; then, recovering my senses, I began to think that the hand I touched was imaginary. In that conviction I stretched out my arm once more, only to encounter the same hand, which, with a cry of horror, I seized, and let go again, drawing back my own. I shuddered, but being able to reason by this time, I decided that while I slept a corpse had been laid near me—for I was sure there was nothing when I lay down on the floor. But whose was the dead body? Some innocent sufferer, perhaps one of my own friends, whom they had strangled, and laid there that I might find before my eyes when I woke the example of what my own fate was to be? That thought made me furious: for the third time I approached the hand with my own; I clasped it, and at the same instant I tried to rise, to draw this dead body toward me, and be certain of the hideous crime. But, as I strove to prop myself on my left elbow, the cold hand I was clasping became alive, and was withdrawn—and I knew in that instant, to my utter astonishment, that I held none other than my own left hand, which lying stiffened on the hard floor, had lost heat and sensation entirely.”

After six months of suspense, he resolved to escape.

He was permitted to walk a while each day in the rubbish-strewn corridor. Among the litter he found a

small piece of marble, and later a long iron bolt, which he managed to pick up unobserved and hide in his clothing.

After fifteen days of steady labor, which lamed his arm and shoulder so that he could hardly raise them, he succeeded in grinding the bolt to a sharp point. He now had a tool, and the rush seat of his chair made a hiding-place for it.

Then he ordered the guards not to sweep out his cell. His jailer presently noticed this, but Casanova said the dust affected his lungs. He met the jailer's offer to sprinkle the floor with water by the plausible excuse that the dampness would be just as bad for him; but the former's suspicions were aroused and he not only had the room carefully cleaned but made a most thorough search of every foot of it. The precious bolt in the chair-seat, however, escaped his attention.

Casanova said nothing, but the next day he exhibited a bloody handkerchief (he had cut his finger in order to stain it), declaring that this cruelty would mean his death. The Inquisition had its own means of despatching its prisoners, and till it was ready they were sacred. The doctor at once ordered that the floor be left unswept.

Thus the prisoner was free to begin. But first the intense cold and then the presence of a Jew money-lender, who was thrust into the same cell, delayed him for several months. He succeeded in making a lamp before his visitor arrived, unravelling threads from his quilt for a wick, and getting oil from salads.

The first night he was alone, Casanova set to work at the floor beneath his bed, boring with his bolt for six hours, then gathering the scraps of wood into a napkin and emptying them next day in the corridor.

He got through the first two-inch plank. There was another beneath it. This was pierced. He came to a third. Three weeks of cautious, difficult toil were needed to make a hole large enough for his body through all this tough wood. And then he discovered there was a flooring of marble beneath, on which his bolt made no impression.

He had read that vinegar would soften marble. The next day he poured a bottleful down the hole, and to his delight succeeded in breaking the blocks out of the cement. Only a thin plank remained between him and the room below, though having by bad luck come against one of the floor beams, he had to enlarge his hole considerably.

All this had taken nearly four months. Two days before the night he had set for his attempt, came a crushing disappointment. He says:

“On the 25th, there happened what makes me shudder even as I write. Precisely at noon I heard the rattling of bolts, a fearful beating of my heart made me think that my last moment had come, and I flung myself on my armchair, stupefied. Laurent entered, and said gayly:

“‘Sir, I have come to bring you good news, on which I congratulate you.’

“At first I thought my liberty was to be restored—I knew no other news which *could* be good; and I saw that I was lost, for the discovery of the hole would have undone me. But Laurent told me to follow him. I asked him to wait till I got ready.

“‘No matter,’ he said, ‘you are only going to leave this dismal cell for a light one, quite new, where you can see half Venice through the two windows; where you can stand upright; where——’

"But I cannot bear to write of it—I seemed to be dying. I implored Laurent to tell the secretary that I thanked the tribunal for its mercy, but begged it in heaven's name to leave me where I was. Laurent told me, with a burst of laughter, that I was mad, that my present cell was execrable, and that I was to be transferred to a delightful one.

"‘Come, come, you must obey orders,’ he exclaimed.

"He led me away. I felt a momentary solace in hearing him order one of his men to follow with the armchair, where my spontoon was still concealed. That was always something! If my beautiful hole in the floor, that I had made with such infinite pains, could have followed me too—but that was impossible! My body went but my soul stayed behind.

"As soon as Laurent saw me in the fresh cell, he had the armchair set down. I flung myself upon it, and he went away, telling me that my bed and all my other belongings should be brought to me at once."

Presently the man rushed back, in mingled rage and terror, and demanded the axe with which the prisoner must have made the hole he had discovered. Casanova replied that any axe he had had must have come from the jailer himself, since he had been his only visitor; and all Laurent's search failed to discover the bolt. The latter after this had a guard sound the floor and walls every day with a bar, but Casanova noted that he never tested the ceiling.

Before long, getting his guard to borrow a book from another prisoner, he succeeded in starting a correspondence with this man, a monk named Balbi. The letters were written with his finger-nail, dipped in mulberry juice, and the watchful Laurent himself was the unconscious messenger.

Casanova decided the next attempt must start at the other end.

"I wrote to him that I would find some means of sending him an instrument with which he could break through the roof of his cell, and having climbed upon it, go to the wall separating his roof from mine. Breaking through that, he would find himself on my roof, which also must be broken through. That done, I would leave my cell, and he and I together would manage to raise one of the great leaden squares that formed the highest palace roof. Once outside that, I would be answerable for the rest.

"But first he must tell the jailer to buy him forty or fifty pictures of saints, and by way of proving his piety, he must cover his walls and ceiling with these, putting the largest on the ceiling. When he had done this, I would tell him more.

"I next ordered Laurent to buy me the new folio Bible that was just printed; for I fancied its great size might enable me to conceal my tool there, and so send it to the monk. But when I saw it, I became gloomy—the bolt was two inches longer than the Bible. The monk wrote to me that the cell was already covered according to my direction, and hoped I would lend him the great Bible which Laurent told him I had bought. But I replied that for three or four days I needed it myself.

"At last I hit upon a device. I told Laurent that on Michaelmas Day I wanted two dishes of macaroni and one of these must be the largest dish he had, for I meant to season it, and send it with my compliments to the worthy gentleman who had lent me books. Laurent would bring me the butter and the Parmesan cheese, but I myself should add them to the boiling macaroni.

"I wrote to the monk preparing him for what was to happen, and on St. Michael's Day all came about as I expected. I had hidden the bolt in the great Bible, wrapped in paper, one inch of it showing on each side. I prepared the cheese and butter; and in due time Laurent brought me in the boiling macaroni and the great dish. Mixing the ingredients, I filled the dish so full that the butter nearly ran over the edge, and then I placed it carefully on the Bible, and put that, with the dish resting on it, into Laurent's hand, warning him not to spill a drop. All his caution was necessary; he went away with his eyes fixed on his burden, lest the butter should run over; and the Bible with the bolt projecting from it were covered, and more than covered, by the huge dish. His one care was to hold that steady, and I saw that I had succeeded. Presently he came back to tell me that not a drop of butter had been spilled."

There followed several weeks of tense anxiety, while the monk laboriously carried out instructions, Casanova being forced to wait inactive,

One day when Balbi had gotten to work at the roof of the other's cell, and the impatient prisoner stood listening to the sounds overhead like the gnawings of a rat, the startling tramp of approaching feet in the corridor came to his ears. He had just time to give the warning signal of two raps against the ceiling, when Laurent appeared, conducting another prisoner, who was to share his confinement.

This unpleasant-looking person, Soradici, proved to be a spy of the Inquisition. The ingenious Casanova wrote two harmless letters to friends, praising the Inquisition, and begged the spy to deliver them when he was released, making him swear on the image of the Virgin not to betray him.

All went as he had expected. The spy was sent for, promptly delivered the letters to his employers, and came back to learn more. Soon breaking through his deceit, Casanova, as if in desperation, dropped on his knees before the Virgin and implored vengeance on the vile creature who had thus desecrated her name. Soradici, overcome with superstitious dread, besought him to avert this fate—whereupon Casanova wrote to Balbi to start work again at three o'clock next day and continue just four hours.

The following morning Casanova appeared to relent and addressed the abject spy:

“Learn that at break of day the Holy Virgin appeared to me, and commanded me to forgive you. You shall not die. The grief that your treachery caused me made me pass all the night sleepless, since I knew that the letters you had given to the secretary would prove my ruin—and my one consolation was to believe that in three days I should see you die in this very cell. But though my mind was full of revenge—unworthy of a Christian—at break of day the image of the Blessed Virgin that you see moved, opened her lips, and said: ‘Soradici is under my protection: I would have you pardon him. In reward of your generosity I will send one of my angels in figure of a man, who shall descend from heaven to break the roof of the cell, and in five or six days to release you. To-day this angel will begin his work at three o'clock, and will work till half an hour before the sun sets, for he must return to me by daylight. When you escape you will take Soradici with you, and you will take care of him all his life, on condition that he quits the profession of a spy forever.’ With these words the Blessed Virgin disappeared.”

Soradici was ready to believe anything, and the con-

firmation given by the sounds above, from three o'clock to seven, removed his last doubts.

At the moment predicted, a week later, the angel in the shape of dirty and dishevelled Father Balbi came through the ceiling.

The latter watched the bewildered Soradici, while Casanova ascended, pierced the roof of the building, and with Balbi's help raised one of the heavy leaden tiles. The brilliant moon forced them to wait, and the time was employed in making a rope of sheets and towels.

At last they set out, leaving Soradici, doubly afraid now that he saw the trick, on his knees.

As they crawled up the steep roof, Balbi gave an exclamation.

"Stop! Stop!"

"What is the matter?"

"I have lost one of the packages tied about my neck."

"Not the cord!" said Casanova, much disturbed.

"No—but my black coat and a very precious manuscript."

"Never mind, you must endure it and follow," replied the other, feeling he would like to toss the foolish fellow after his manuscript.

They gained the ridge and worked their way along it. The monk's hat fell off, rolled down the roof, and fell into the canal.

"It is a bad omen," he muttered in despair.

Leaving him straddling the summit, Casanova went on to explore.

He saw a skylight. But when he reached it, he found it was covered with an iron grating.

Even his firmness was almost overcome. Then,

as he sat in doubt, the bell tolled out the midnight hour. He remembered his premonition that he should gain his liberty on that All Saints' Day thus ushered in. Resolutely attacking the grating, in fifteen minutes he tore it loose from its fastenings.

He lowered the trembling Balbi to the room below, but the distance was too great for him to drop down himself. Prowling about the roof he discovered a long ladder, and by desperate exertions managed to get it through the opening, almost falling off into the water in his efforts.

Descending, he was in the garret, the door securely bolted from the outside.

Dropping down in complete exhaustion, Casanova went to sleep!

Dawn was breaking when he came to himself. For two hours Balbi had been shaking him, even calling into his ear.

He leaped up.

"This place must have some way out," he declared. "We will break everything; there is not a moment to lose."

They forced the door with the invaluable bolt, coming into a room containing musty government records.

Down one staircase and then another, they crept, reaching the chancellor's office below. This lock resisted them, but they pierced the wood, and beat and pried a hole in the door large enough to squeeze through.

It looked as if, after all, their superhuman efforts were doomed to failure. There were people in the courtyard outside; the doors could not be broken; at any moment the alarm might be given.

At no moment did Casanova show more intrepidity.

He calmly exchanged his tattered clothes for his fresh suit, and put on the silk cloak and the plumed and feathered hat in which he had been taken two years before.

The monk abandoned himself to despairing lamentations and reproaches. Casanova calmly opened a window and looked out.

A servant in the courtyard saw him. Hastily the adventurer drew back, thinking that now, indeed, all was over.

But the man ran to the majordomo and told him he had somehow locked up a gentleman in the offices the night before.

It was easy to believe. The official came up the stairs.

The two inside heard the lock grate, saw the functionary's inquiring and alarmed face as the heavy door swung open.

Without a word Casanova walked past him, in the dignity of an insulted nobleman, the trembling Balbi at his heels. The majordomo, who had feared dismissal, was willing enough to have no attention paid to his fancied error and to let bygones be bygones.

They reached the shore, and stepped into a gondola. Encouraged by the promise of a double fee, the rowers shot the bark over the waters. And with no further mishap, the adventurer passed beyond the borders of Italy.

CHAPTER VII

MRS. SCOTT'S FLIGHT FROM THE INDIANS

IN 1786 there appeared the following "True and Wonderful Narrative" of the "Surprising Captivity and Remarkable Deliverance" of Mrs. Francis Scott, an inhabitant of Washington County, Virginia, who was taken by the Indians.

"On Wednesday the 29th of June, 1785, late in the evening, a large company of armed men passed the house on their way to Kentucky, some part of whom encamped within two miles. Mr. Scott's living on a frontier part generally made the family watchful; but on this calamitous day, after so large a body of men had passed, he lay down in his bed and imprudently left one of the doors of his house open; the children were also in bed and asleep.

"Mrs. Scott was nearly undressed when, to her unutterable astonishment and horror, she saw rushing in through the open door painted savages, with their arms presented, who at the same time raised a hideous shriek.

"Mr. Scott, being awake, instantly jumped from his bed and was immediately fired at. He forced his way through the midst of the enemy and got out of the house, but fell a few paces from the door. An Indian seized Mrs. Scott and ordered her to a particular place, charging her not to move.

"Here the unfortunate woman was forced to witness the cruel murder of her four children, one of whom was actually tomahawked in her arms.

“In the house were four good rifles, well loaded, belonging to people that had left them as they were going to Kentucky. The Indians, thirteen in number, Delawares and Mingoes, seized these and all the plunder they could lay their hands on, and hastily began a retreat into the wilderness.

“It was now late in the evening, and they travelled all that night. Next morning the chief allotted to each of his followers his share of the plunder and prisoners, at the same time detaching nine of his party to go on a horse-stealing expedition on Clinch River.

“The eleventh day after Mrs. Scott's capture, the four Indians who had her in charge stopped at a place fixed on for a rendezvous, and to hunt, being now in great want of provisions. Three of them set out on the hunting expedition, leaving their chief, an old man, to take care of the prisoner, who now had to all appearances become reconciled to her situation, and expressed a willingness to proceed to the Indian towns—which seemed to have the desired effect of lessening her keeper's watchfulness.

“In the daytime, while the old man was graining a deerskin, Mrs. Scott, pondering on her situation, began anxiously to look for an opportunity to make her escape.

“At length, having matured her resolution in her own mind, upon the first opportunity she went to the old chief with great confidence. In the most uninterested way she asked him for liberty to go to a small stream, a little distance off, to wash from her apron the blood that had remained upon it since the fatal night.

“He replied in English: ‘Go along.’

“She then walked by him. His face being in a con-

trary direction from that in which she was going, and he very busy in dressing the skin, she passed on seemingly unnoticed by him.

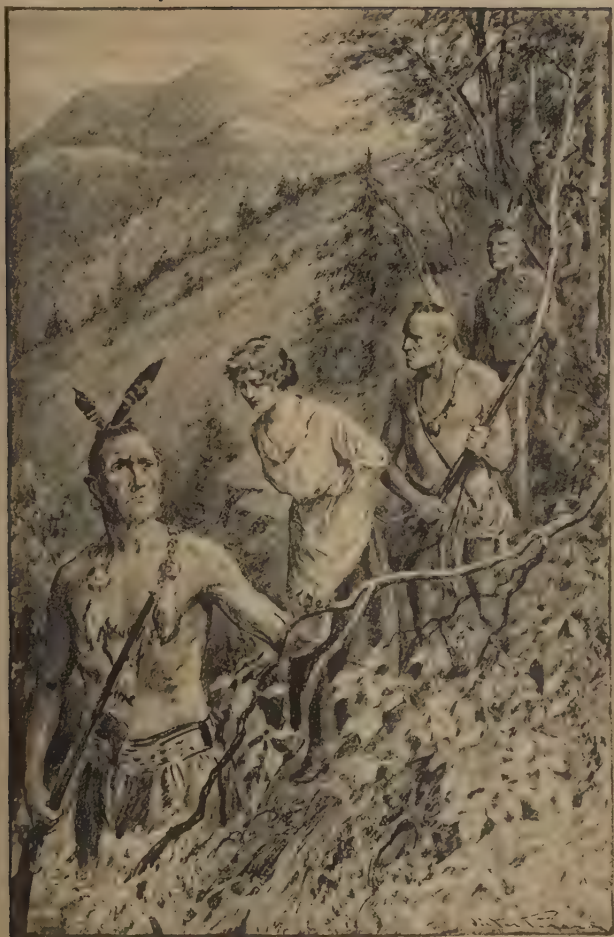
"After arriving at the water, instead of stopping to wash her apron as she had pretended, she hurried on without a moment's delay.

"She laid her course for a high barren mountain which was in sight, and travelled till late at night. Then she came down into the valley in search of the track along which she had been brought by the Indians a few days before, hoping thereby to find her way back to the settlements without the imminent peril, which now surrounded her, of being lost and perishing with hunger in this unknown region.

"Crossing the valley to the side of a river, she observed in the sand footprints of two men who had gone up-stream and just returned. She concluded these must have been her pursuers, which excited in her breast emotions of gratitude and thankfulness to divine Providence for so timely a deliverance.

"Being without any provisions, having no kind of weapon or tool to assist her in getting any, and almost destitute of clothing; knowing that a vast tract of rugged high mountains intervened between where she was and the inhabitants easterly—and she almost as ignorant as a child of the method of steering through the woods; these reflections produced disagreeable sensations. But certain death, either by hunger or wild beasts, seemed to be better than to be in the power of beings who excited in her such horror. She addressed heaven, and taking courage, proceeded onward.

"After travelling three days, she nearly ran into the Indians, as she supposed, who had been sent to Clinch River to steal horses; but providentially hearing their



It was now late in the evening, and they travelled all that night

approach, she concealed herself among the canes till they had passed.

"This gave her fresh alarm, and her mind being filled with consternation, she got lost, wandering back and forth for several days.

"At length she came to a river that seemed to come from the east. Concluding that it was Sandy River, she resolved to trace it to its source, which is adjacent to the Clinch settlement.

"After proceeding up this stream several days, she came to the point where it runs through the great laurel mountain, where there is a prodigious waterfall and high, craggy cliffs along the water's edge. That way seemed impassable. The mountain looked steep and difficult enough, but our mournful traveller concluded this latter way was the best. She therefore ascended for some time, but coming to a lofty range of inaccessible rocks, she turned toward the river again.

"Getting into a steep gully and scrambling over several high boulders, she reached the riverside, where, to her inexpressible affliction, she found that an overhanging rock fifteen or twenty feet high formed the bank.

"Here a solemn pause ensued. She tried to retrace her steps, but the rocks she had descended prevented her, so she returned to the edge of the precipice and gazed at the bottom which she now viewed as the certain spot to end her troubles—unless she chose to remain where she was and perish of hunger or by wild beasts."

After serious meditation and devout exercises, she determined on leaping from the height. Accordingly she jumped off. Wonderful to relate, though the river's edge below was covered with uneven rocks, not a bone

was broken; but being stunned by the fall, she lay for some time unable to proceed.

The dry season had caused the river to be shallow. She travelled in the water and by its edge, until she got through the mountain, which she thought was several miles. After this, as she travelled along the bank, a venomous snake bit her on the ankle. She had the strength to kill it, but knowing its kind she concluded death must soon overtake her.

By this time, Mrs. Scott was reduced to a mere skeleton with fatigue, hunger, and grief. For four weeks of exhausting travel she had had no food but the juice of wild cane-stalks, sassafras leaves, and some other plants she did not know. She had seen buffalo, elk, deer, bear, and wolves, and while these had not harmed her, they had added to her terrors. One day a bear came past with a young fawn in his mouth; discovering her he dropped his prey and ran off. Almost famished, Mrs. Scott went to pick it up, but fear that the animal might return and attack her drove her on again, despairing.

It may be that this reduced state of her system saved her from the effects of the snake's poison; certainly, very little pain succeeded the bite and there was only a slight swelling.

The wanderer now left the river and came to where the valley split in two. It was a hard situation for the poor creature: one branch led to the settlement, the other to the wilderness. She could not hold out much longer—so it was a choice between life and death, with nothing to guide her.

She was thus agitated when she saw a brilliantly colored bird of some sort flying low, which took the left-hand valley. While wondering if this meant any-

thing for her, another passed her and followed the same direction.

Accepting this as an assurance that her own road lay there, she branched off after them and toiled on for two days more.

Then, on August 11, she saw ahead of her the log houses of the settlement at New Garden—and knew that after three months of terrible suffering and efforts almost superhuman for a woman, she was saved.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIGHT THAT FAILED

THE gloomy records of polar exploration tell of many desperate struggles, but none more memorable than that made by the ill-fated Lieutenant De Long.

His expedition, fitted out by James Gordon Bennett, sailed from San Francisco in July, 1879, to make an attempt at the pole by the untried way of Bering Strait. The commander had a party of twenty-seven besides three Chinamen and two Aleut dog-drivers.

By September 6 they had reached about latitude 78° N. and longitude 157° W.—north of the island of New Siberia, nearly four hundred miles westward along the bleak Siberian coast.

That day the ice closed about the little steamer, and never fully relaxed its grasp.

For a year and nine months De Long made every effort to save the ship, damaged by the jamming floes, meanwhile exploring over the ice and discovering Henrietta and Jeannette Islands.

During the night of June 10, 1881, after a day of alarming movements in the encircling ice, the floe split in two with a report like that of a cannon, leaving the ship hanging to one edge, while the other body of ice, on which were the dogs and observatory, drifted away some hundreds of yards.

De Long consulted the old whaler, Dunbar.

"She'll be under the floe or on top of it before to-morrow night," said the experienced captain.

Next day, all the stores and boats were removed, the commander superintending from the ship's bridge. Scarcely was everything off, when the ice pressure pushed the steamer over at such an angle that standing on the bridge was impossible. De Long, the last man to leave, jumped off on the ice. The party camped a quarter of a mile away.

About four o'clock the following morning, the whole tired camp was aroused by a shout from the man on watch:

"Hurry, if you want to see the last of the *Jeannette*! There she goes! There she goes!"

The crew came running out.

"Amid the rattling and battering of her timbers, the ship righted and stood almost upright; the crushing floes backed slowly off, and as she sank with slowly accelerated velocity, the yard-arms were stripped and broken upward, parallel to the masts; and so, like a great gaunt skeleton clapping its hands above its head, she plunged out of sight."

Here were these thirty-three human beings then, five of them sick, with twenty-three dogs, five sleds, six tents, and three boats, on a great ice-field, moving in what direction they did not know, hundreds of miles from even the dreary Siberian shore.

De Long fully recognized the seriousness of the situation and went at his task with quiet resolution. Spending a few days in organizing the party and in packing, he started south on June 18, travelling by night and resting through the day, hoping to cover the five hundred miles to the mouth of the Lena River and reach some settlement.

It was hard going. The boats had to be dragged by hand, and the surface was so rough and broken up with

hummocks that a road had to be smoothed off in front of them. The sharp edges went through the footgear like knives.

“Many, many times,” says Engineer Melville, “after a day’s march, have I seen no less than six of my men standing with their bare feet on the ice, having worn off the very soles of their stockings. A large number marched with their toes protruding through their moccasins, some with the uppers full of holes, out of which the water and slush spurted at every step. I have here to say that no ship’s company ever endured such severe toil with so little complaint. Another crew, perhaps, may be found to do as well, but *better*—never!”

After several weeks of terrible exertions, averaging perhaps twenty-five miles a day on their southward journey, De Long succeeded in getting an observation of the sun to check their position.

His feelings may be imagined when he discovered that in spite of these exhausting efforts, the drift of the ice-field had carried them so far in the opposite direction that they were twenty-five miles farther away than when they had started! He said nothing, but the men guessed something of the truth, and toiled on in discouragement.

A week later they were cheered by finding they had made some little progress; and they labored along, often not advancing more than a mile a day.

On July 29 they reached new land, which was christened Bennett Island; and having a little open water, they set out in the three boats after killing ten of the poorest dogs. Sailing, rowing, sledging, they crept southwest five miles a day. Eight more dogs strayed away. They had to lighten the boats by shooting two

of the remaining four. Fogs, storms, short rations, illness, and fatigue became their world. The last bit of bread was divided up on August 18. But De Long held them to the task in spite of every hardship, and they passed New Siberia early in September.

On the 12th a terrific gale struck them. The second cutter, with Lieutenant Chipp and nine men, foundered in the night; and the other two boats were separated.

De Long held on and reached land at the tip of the Lena Delta on September 17. They had to land by wading waist-deep through the icy surf. Only the leader's unconquered will aroused his men sufficiently to bring ashore their scanty stock of provisions.

They found themselves, after a day's enforced rest, with three and a half days' rations, at some unknown spot in the vast frozen wilderness of the Lena Delta. All had frost-bitten feet, and three could hardly walk.

De Long set out southward. With a spirit that was superb, he cheered his despairing comrades ever on to fresh effort. The last tin of pemmican was doled out. The Chinook hunter managed to shoot three reindeer, two with one bullet; and with this encouragement, they pressed on their weary march.

By October 3 this supply was exhausted. The one remaining dog was killed for food. One man died and was buried in the ice. A solitary ptarmigan gave them a scanty meal.

On the 9th De Long sent forward the two strongest men, Nindemann and Noros, to try for help from the settlement which he thought only twelve miles away. (In reality it was over a hundred and fifty.)

Unable to proceed farther, with no food and scarcely any fire-wood, this heroic officer held out for three

weeks. His companions passed away, one by one, before his eyes. And finally his brave spirit joined them.

Melville and his party, after frightful hardships, reached some native huts on the Lena River. Through the persistent heroism of this engineer, and by a miracle of good fortune, Nindemann and Noros were saved. Only in late November, when the natives absolutely refused to continue, did Melville abandon the search for De Long. Even then he insisted on staying through the winter with five men, and setting out in March, 1882, to look for his unfortunate commander. After a week's search they found him. Beside him in the snow lay the famous Ice Journal which he had kept up day by day—till he had no longer strength to write.

CHAPTER IX

A SWIM FOR LIFE IN THE ARCTIC

It is an extraordinary fact that the feat of drifting poleward, while the *Fram* was gripped in the ice, by which Fridtjof Nansen set the Norwegian flag "Farthest North" in 1897, was made possible through a trifling incident of the De Long expedition.

While the *Jeannette's* crew was working its way over the ice to New Siberia, as just related, the same Noros who was sent ahead by De Long in his extremity, happened to leave a pair of oilskin trousers on the ice. His name and that of the ship were stamped on them. Over nine years later, these oilskins were picked up by Esquimaux, hundreds of miles away on the eastern coast of Greenland! Doctor Nansen saw the fact published in a Danish scientific paper; it confirmed his belief that there was a current setting across the pole, and led to his brilliant achievement.

Nansen's absorbing narrative is full of tales of courage and endurance. The following extract from his diary on New Year's, 1895, after being frozen in on the *Fram* for over a year, implies much of the passive fortitude required:

"I often think of Shakespeare's Viola who sat 'like patience on a monument.' Could we not pass as representatives of this marble patience, imprisoned here on the ice while the years roll by awaiting our time? I should like to design such a monument. It should be a lonely man in shaggy wolfskin clothing, all covered

From "Farthest North," by Fridtjof Nansen; copyright, 1898, by Harper & Brothers.

with hoarfrost, sitting on a mound of ice, and gazing out into the darkness across these boundless, ponderous masses of ice, awaiting the return of daylight and spring."

But the particular incident which illustrates our point so well occurred on the fifteen months' sledging expedition made by him and Johansen. These two had finished the long strange winter in Franz Josef Land (on Frederick Jackson Island) and started back southward on May 19.

They reached open water two weeks later, lashed the kayaks together, and in high spirits sailed along all day.

"In the evening we put in to the edge of the ice, so as to stretch our legs a little; they were stiff with sitting in the kayak all day, and we wanted to get a little view over the water to the west, by ascending a hummock. As we went ashore the question arose as to how we should moor our precious vessel. 'Take one of the braces,' said Johansen; he was standing on the ice. 'But is it strong enough?' 'Yes,' he answered; 'I have used it as a halyard on my sledge-sail all the time.' 'Oh, well, it doesn't require much to hold these light kayaks,' said I, a little ashamed of having been so timid, and I moored them with the halyard, which was a strap cut from a raw walrus hide.

"We had been on the ice a little while, moving up and down close to the kayaks. The wind had stopped considerably, and seemed to be more westerly, making it doubtful whether we could make use of it any longer, and we went up on to a hummock close by to ascertain this better. As we stood there, Johansen suddenly cried: 'I say! the kayaks are adrift!' We ran down as hard as we could. They were already a little way

out, and were drifting quickly off; the painter had given way.

“‘Here, take my watch!’ I said to Johansen, giving it to him; and as quickly as possible I threw off some clothing, so as to be able to swim more easily; I did not dare to take everything off, as I might easily get cramp. I sprang into the water, but the wind was off the ice, and the light kayaks, with their high rigging, gave it a good hold. They were already well out, and were drifting rapidly.

“The water was icy cold, it was hard work swimming with clothes on, and the kayaks drifted farther and farther, often quicker than I could swim. It seemed more than doubtful whether I could manage it. But all our hope was drifting there; all we possessed was on board; we had not even a knife with us; and whether I got cramp and sank here, or turned back without the kayaks, it would come to pretty much the same thing; so I exerted myself to the utmost. When I got tired I turned over, and swam on my back, and then I could see Johansen walking restlessly up and down on the ice. Poor lad! He could not stand still, and thought it dreadful not to be able to do anything. He had not much hope that I could do it, but it would not improve matters in the least if he threw himself into the water too. He said afterward that these were the worst moments he had ever lived through. But when I turned over again, and saw that I was nearer the kayaks, my courage rose, and I redoubled my exertions. I felt, however, that my limbs were gradually stiffening and losing all feeling, and I knew that in a short time I should not be able to move them. But there was not far to go now; if I could only hold out a little longer, we should be saved—and I went on.

The strokes became more and more feeble, but the distance became shorter and shorter, and I began to think I should reach the kayaks.

“At last I was able to stretch out my hand to the snow-shoe, which lay across the sterns; I grasped it, pulled myself in to the edge of the kayak—and we were saved. I tried to pull myself up, but the whole of my body was so stiff with cold, that this was an impossibility.

“For a moment I thought that after all it was too late; I was to get so far, but not be able to get in. After a little, however, I managed to swing one leg up on the edge of the sledge which lay on the deck, and in this way managed to tumble up. There I sat, but so stiff with cold, that I had difficulty in paddling. Nor was it easy to paddle in the double vessel, where I first had to take one or two strokes on one side, and then step into the other kayak to take a few strokes on the other side. If I had been able to separate them, and row in one while I towed the other, it would have been easy enough; but I could not undertake that piece of work, for I should have been stiff before it was done; the thing to be done was to keep warm by rowing as hard as I could. The cold had robbed my whole body of feeling, but when the gusts of wind came they seemed to go right through me as I stood there in my thin, wet woollen shirt. I shivered, my teeth chattered, and I was numb almost all over; but I could still use the paddle, and I should get warm when I got back on to the ice again.

“Two auks were lying close to the bow, and the thought of having auk for supper was too tempting we were in want of food now. I got hold of my gun and shot them with one discharge. Johansen said

Afterward that he started at the report, thinking some accident had happened, and could not understand what was about out there, but when he saw me paddle and pick up two birds he thought I had gone out of my mind. At last I managed to reach the edge of the ice, but the current had driven me a long way from our landing-place. Johansen came along the edge of the ice, jumped into the kayak beside me, and we soon got back to our place.

"I was undeniably a good deal exhausted, and could scarcely manage to crawl on land. I could scarcely stand, and while I shook and trembled all over, Johansen had to pull off the wet things I had on, put on the few dry ones I still had in reserve, and spread the sleeping-bag out upon the ice. I packed myself well into it, and he covered me with the sail and everything he could find to keep out the cold air. There I lay shivering for a long time, but gradually the warmth began to return to my body. For some time longer, however, my feet had no more feeling in them than icicles, for they had been partly naked in the water. While Johansen put up the tent and prepared supper, consisting of my two auks, I fell asleep. He let me sleep quietly, and when I awoke, supper had been ready for some time, and stood simmering over the fire. Auk and hot soup effaced the last traces of my swim. During the night my clothes were hung out to dry, and the next day were all nearly dry again."

CHAPTER X

THROUGH AN ANTARCTIC BLIZZARD

AMONG the hardy explorers who have in the last few years made the ice-locked antarctic continent give up its secrets, Doctor Douglas Mawson occupies an honorable place. He and two companions located the south magnetic pole ($72^{\circ} 25' \text{ S.}$, $155^{\circ} 16' \text{ W.}$) on the ice-cap, seven thousand feet above sea-level; two years later, on an expedition commanded by himself, he confirmed the discredited American discovery of Wilkes Land in 1840, skirting the antarctic circle for twelve hundred miles; and his scientific observations have been of profound interest.

From his many adventures one in particular stands out.

His main party had established itself, January 6, 1912, in Adelie Land, on the edge of the antarctic continent, almost due south of Adelaide, Australia. The weather was terrible, even for the stormy antarctic regions: one gale followed another, and from March to November the wind blew continually, varying only between gales and violent hurricanes. These at times exceeded one hundred and sixteen miles an hour. They would hurl down strongly built structures and lift small stones from the ground. "This river of air rushing unceasingly down from the plateau of the great antarctic continent came loaded with more or less drift-snow, so that it was often impossible to see one's hand in front of one. For days together not a

glimpse would be caught of the neighboring landscape. Through it the daylight came fitfully, and in the winter darkness weird lights (St. Elmo's fire) played about on all exposed objects. Such is the weather of Adelie Land—unparalleled by anything else on earth."

At a temperature of twenty-eight below zero, in this hundred-mile-an-hour hurricane, these intrepid scientists would push into the storm and feel their way to their instruments. By the time they got back, their faces would be covered with a plate of ice which would have to be pulled loose from beard and eyebrows.

In November five parties set out to map the surrounding country. Mawson himself, with Lieutenant Ninnis and Doctor Mertz, was to cross the highlands and explore the coast to the east. They took three sledges and seventeen dogs, with seventeen hundred pounds of supplies.

The party had five weeks of hard travelling, over dangerous crevasses, crossing difficult glaciers, fighting their way over the rough surface with many a fall and continual upsets of sledges.

Then luck seemed to turn. The weather got better. Far below stretched ahead of them the unknown coastline, which their eyes were first to see. Ninnis had gotten relief from a gathered finger through lancing. Their spirits were high as they set out on the 14th of December. Mertz, breaking the trail ahead of the dogs on skis, sang student songs as he went.

Mawson came next with the leading sledge, one having been abandoned. Behind him walked Ninnis, one hand in a sling.

The leader jumped on his sledge to rest and work out the noon observation.

Presently he saw under him the hazy outline of a

crevasse. They had passed dozens that looked worse; Ninnis in particular had fallen through several times. Mawson called back a warning and went on.

Then he saw Mertz looking around anxiously. He turned. Ninnis, his dogs and sledge had all disappeared. They rushed back. A gaping hole told the story. There was no answer to their calls; their ropes would reach nothing.

At length, after reading the burial service, they were forced to go on. They had only ten days' food left, nothing for the dogs, no tent, spade, axe.

They started homeward on their three-hundred-mile effort. The poorest dogs served for food to eke out the scant supply; tin boxes served for mugs or spoons; the sun made the snow surface sticky, so they travelled by night; they were attacked by snow-blindness; the compass proved of no use because of the nearness to the magnetic pole. Still they pushed on.

One dog after another gave out and was killed. The food was so insufficient that all the instruments, except a theodolite, the camera and exposed films, and everything else possible were thrown away.

Yet when the sky cleared on Christmas day, they treated themselves to extra portions of dog-stew, wished each other merrier Christmases for the future, checked up their location, and resolutely faced the one hundred and sixty miles remaining.

On the 28th, the last dog was despatched. A few days later Mertz began to show signs of breaking down. Encouraged by his companion, he kept on trying to advance; but the frequent falls were so hard on him that Mawson persuaded him to ride. In spite of all he grew weaker, his condition making it impossible for the other to proceed. What this meant, Mawson knew

well. "Both our chances are going now," he wrote in his diary on January 6.

But he nursed his companion faithfully—till next night the end came, and he was alone in this frozen wilderness.

He says, in his account of what followed:

"For hours I lay in the bag rolling over in my mind all that lay behind and the chance of the future.

"My condition was such that I might go off rapidly at any time. The gnawing in the stomach had developed there a permanent weakness, so that it was not possible to hold myself up in certain positions. Several of my toes began to blacken at the tips and the nails worked loose.

"The weather remained abominable. Alone, to break and pitch camp in the winds and to negotiate the crevassed region of the Mertz Glacier ahead was a doubtful undertaking. Weak as I was, there seemed little hope of reaching the hut. On the other hand, I felt that I must go on to the end, for it is inaction that is so hard to brook. Failing reaching the hut, a good work would be accomplished if only a point likely to catch the eye of any search-party could be reached, a cairn erected, and our diaries cached. Determined to make every effort to accomplish one or the other of these objects, I commenced, when the day had advanced considerably, to modify the sledge and camping-gear so as to most efficiently meet the demands of a one-man sledging enterprise.

"The sky remained overcast, but the wind fell off till it became almost calm for several hours. This gave a chance to get to work on the sledge, sawing it in halves with a pocket tool, rigging a mast, spar, etc. The spade was remended and a sail made from a foot-

bag and Mertz's burberry jacket. Later in the day I took Mertz's body, wrapped up in his sleeping-bag, outside the tent, piled snow-blocks around him, and raised a rough cross made of two half-runners of the sledge.

"On January 9 the weather was overcast and fairly thick, drift flying in a wind reaching about fifty miles per hour. There were still matters that wanted attending to, and the chances were doubtful of ever getting the awkward tent up again in such a wind. Hour after hour I racked my brains for dodges to facilitate operations and make up for my helplessness in striking and pitching camp unaided in the prevailing winds. In this I was eventually successful, but at what a cost of time on each occasion!

"January 10 was an impossible travelling day, on account of thick drift and high wind, so the time was spent in carefully counting over the food and cooking all the remainder of the dog-meat, in order to save carrying unnecessary kerosene. Late in the afternoon the wind fell and the sun peered through the clouds; but it caught me in the middle of a long job riveting and lashing the broken shovel, so it happened that camp was unbroken till the following day.

"January 11 was a beautiful, calm, sunshiny day. The surface was good and slightly down-hill. From the start my feet felt very lumpy and sore. After covering a mile they had become so painful that I decided to make an examination of them on the spot. It being a still, sunny day, it was possible to do this sitting on the sledge. The sight gave me quite a shock, for the skin, thickened by habitually walking only in fur boots, had separated. In each case a complete cast was shed, and abundant watery fluid had escaped into the socks.

In the absence of nutriment no adequate under-skin had formed. The frail tissue was everywhere abraded and raw.

"I did what appeared to be best in the circumstances—smeared them well with lanolin, of which, fortunately, there was a good store, and with bandages lashed the skin-casts back in place, as they were comfortable and soft to touch the raw surface. Above this I wore six pairs of thick woollen socks, fur boots, and a soft leather overshoe. Then I removed most of my clothing and bathed in the glorious sunshine. A tingling sensation spread throughout my body, and I felt stronger every minute.

"Sunshine is the elixir of life for those who have been without it for weeks in the snows and winds of the antarctic plateau.

"When starting that day in such ideal weather I had thought to accomplish more; but after six and a quarter miles, at 5.30 p. m., I felt nerve-worn and had to camp, 'so worn that had it not been a delightful evening could not have found strength to erect the tent.'

"The following day strong wind and thick drift prevailed.

"On the 13th camp was broken again in good weather, and a slow descent made over a rough crevassed blue ice surface into the valley of the Mertz Glacier.

"Descended hard ice-slopes over crevasses, etc.—almost all descent—but surface cut my feet up. At 8 p. m. camped, having done only five and three-quarter miles. Painful feet—on camping find feet worse than ever. Things look bad, but shall persevere. It is now 11 p. m., and the glacier is firing off like

artillery—appears to send up great jets of imprisoned air.’

“The next day the bed of the glacier was reached. Fifteen miles away, across the valley occupied by crevassed and ridged ice, the slopes could be seen rising to the plateau in the direction of winter quarters. Away to the north Aurora Peak, a landmark on our outward journey, was visible.

“The crossing of the Mertz Glacier took some days, during which time the sky remained overcast and snow fell in frequent showers. The soft surface underfoot was very comfortable for the sore feet, but made the sledge-dragging immensely heavy. There were many providential escapes from crevasses, the most remarkable occurring on January 17. On that occasion I had gone a couple of miles in light-falling snow, and had ‘escaped several large, open crevasses, not seeing them until right upon them or grazing past. I blundered blindly on. Then, going up a long, fairly steep slope, deeply covered with soft snow, broke through lid of crevasse, but caught myself at thighs—got out—turned fifty yards to the north, then attempted cross trend of crevasse, there being no indication thereof. A few moments later was dangling fourteen feet below on end of rope in crevasse—sledge creeping to mouth. Had time to say to myself, “So this is the end,” expecting every moment the sledge to crash on my head and both of us go to the bottom unseen below—then thought of the food uneaten on sledge—but as the sledge pulled up without letting me down, thought of Providence again giving me a chance.’

“The chance was very small, considering my weak condition. The width of the crevasse was about six feet, so that I hung freely in space, turning slowly

round. A great effort brought me to a knot in the rope, and after a moment's rest I was able to reach another, and then the top just below the overhanging snow-lid into which the rope had cut. Then, when gently climbing out on to the surface, a further section of the lid gave way, precipitating me once more to the full length of the rope. Exhausted, weak, and chilled (for my hands were bare and pounds of snow had got inside my clothes), I hung with the firm conviction that all was over except the passing. Below was a black chasm; it would be but the work of a moment to slip from the harness, and then all the pain and toil would be over. It was a rare situation—rare temptation, a chance to quit small things for great—to pass from the petty exploration of a planet to the vaster unknown beyond. But there was all eternity for that, and at its longest the present would be but short. I felt better for the thought.

“My strength was fast ebbing; in a few minutes it would be too late. It was the occasion for a supreme effort. New strength seemed to come to my assistance as I addressed myself to one last tremendous attempt. The struggle occupied some time, but by a miracle brought me safely to the surface. This time I emerged feet first, still holding on to the rope, and pushed myself out extended at full length over the snow-bridge. The solid ground was reached.

“Then the reaction was so great that I could do nothing for quite an hour. After that the tent was erected in slow stages and finally food prepared. Later on I lay in the sleeping-bag thinking things over. The problem that absorbed me for a time was whether it was better to enjoy life for a day or two sleeping and eating my fill until the provisions gave out, or to plug

on again in hunger with the prospect of any moment plunging into eternity without the great luxury of consuming the food. At this stage an idea presented itself that greatly improved the prospects. A length of Alpine rope was available, and out of this a rope-ladder was made, one end of which was attached to the bow of the sledge, the other carried over my left shoulder and loosely attached to the sledge-harness.

"The following day snow continued to fall, but, buoyed up by the safety-ladder, camp was broken as usual and I continued with the very eventful journey across the glacier.

"It ended successfully, thanks to the ladder, for on three occasions I was precipitated the length of my harness rope into crevasses, but climbed out easily by ascending the safety device. Fortunately the sledge never followed, owing, no doubt, in large measure to the fact that soft snow lay very deep on the ground, often as deep as one's knees.

"The western side of the glacier was reached before noon on January 19. Ahead were steep, snow-covered slopes, up which a laborious climb was commenced the following day.

"Every ounce that it was possible to do without was discarded from the load. Amongst other things left by the way were the rope-ladder and crampons. Fortunately the wind was of considerable assistance at this stage. With full sail set and the lightest possible load a few miles' progress was made each day notwithstanding the up-grade. The sky remained densely overcast, and it snowed heavily most of the time. For some days vision was limited to a few yards, for dense, driving snow filled the whole atmosphere. In such winds, on each occasion quite a long distance was

covered, for, with sail set, little energy was required to keep the sledge going. It was when camping-time came that the greatest difficulty had to be faced—that of erecting the tent single-handed, with the wind tearing savagely at it.

“By January 27 the crest of the plateau was reached, an ascent of quite two thousand five hundred feet in the week. A high blizzard was raging, the snow falling in large round pellets, to be compacted by the wind. In a single day the whole surface of the plateau thereabouts had been raised two and a half feet. The new surface was quite good to sledge over, the runners making but little impression.

“Bad weather, added to the inadequate ration, was beginning to tell again—patches of beard came out, and every day hair strewn the floor of the tent and even became a nuisance in the hoosh.

“Miraculous good fortune came on January 29. On that day, with a good wind helping and considerable drift in the air, whilst travelling along on an even slow down-grade, something dark loomed through the drift a little to the right. All sorts of possibilities fled through my mind as the sledge was headed for it. The unexpected happened—it was a cairn erected by McLean, Hodgeman, and Hurley, who had been out searching for us. And on the top of the mound was a bag of food, left on the off-chance of its being met!

“With it was a note stating that the ship had arrived at the hut and was waiting, that Amundsen had reached the pole, and that Scott was remaining another year in Antarctica.

“And so the marvel had happened and I had escaped alive!”

PART II
THE TREASURE-SEEKERS

There have always been men a-plenty who were ready to face any dangers for the chance of getting gold. Only too often they have not hesitated to face also the laws of God and man. For in a vast majority of these seekings the treasure has been taken only by that right of the strongest which the world for thousands of years has sought to curb and outgrow.

The first famous expedition after treasure seems to have been that of Jason, in his fifty-oared "Argo," seeking the Golden Fleece; and all other companies, however stout-hearted, pale beside that which numbered among it Hercules, Theseus, Orpheus, and Nestor. The wise schoolboy of to-day laughs at the breathless old tales of their perils—the Clashing Islands, the fire-breathing bull, the menacing crop from the dragon's teeth, the sleepless dragon. But it is probable that the ancient legend commemorates some real expedition of daring Greek adventurers, bent on spoil, pushing their way to the fringes of the known world.

We reach firmer ground with Hanno, the Carthaginian, who sailed to the opposite "ends of the earth" about 500 B. C., passing beyond the Pillars of Hercules; and the hardy Phœnician sailors surely quested far and near after the wealth of commerce and of spoils.

Many of the great barbarian waves which swept over Europe and Asia were due mainly to this lust of plunder and "easy money," as when the Gauls in 390 B. C.

sacked Rome and only left on payment of a great treasure in gold, and when Alaric and his Goths eight hundred years later ravaged the imperial city.

Early Britain had more than her share of these unwelcome seekers after others' treasure. Hengist and Horsa with their Jutes harried her in the fifth century; Sweyn and his fierce Danes only ceased their successful assaults on the payment of tribute by Ethelred the Unready; the dashing Vikings (or fiord-dwellers), who captured Paris three times, settled themselves in Normandy, and had camps at the mouth of nearly every navigable river of France, took their will of her for three centuries, until, liking these tastes, they finally gobbled up the whole in the Norman invasion of 1066—having long before swept on to Sicily and southern Italy.

Even the Crusaders in 1204 turned aside from their thoughts of the Holy City to plunder the riches of Constantinople—with little more pretext than that needed by Genghis Khan when he sacked Peking eleven years later.

Brave men were these, but robbers all. Nor had the dashing Drake very much more justification for some of the buccaneering expeditions during those years from 1572–1579, when he circumnavigated the globe and took such vast treasures from the Spaniards. The exploits of the heroes in “*The Pirates' Own Book*”—Lafitte, Blackbeard, Kidd, Mary Read, and the Algerine Corsairs—were actuated by much the same motives.

We have come to look somewhat differently at these matters, even though modern naval warfare still permits

legalized piracy. The vast fortunes secured by the British East India Company in the eighteenth century were won by methods on the border-line between conquest and commerce. The modern treasure-seekers have been the Forty-niners, searching for California nuggets; the diamond hunters of South Africa in 1867; those frantic "gold-rushers" of Ballarat and of the Klondike—with occasional hunters after buried or sunken plunder, like that of Cocos Island, which might be considered the property of him who recovered it. And, of course, the riches which have drawn most minds for half a century are those incalculable ones of modern business—which often calls out the same qualities as the romantic treasure-hunting of centuries ago.

The resolute men selected for this section include examples of the conqueror, the pirate, the lost-treasure hunter, the miner of the earth's riches, the twentieth-century business man. Whatever other qualities they may have possessed, in these scenes they are actuated mainly by the lure of gold.

CHAPTER XI

WITH NO VIRTUE SAVE COURAGE

WHILE the Puritans and Pilgrims were contending with the rigors of nature and the problems of a new colony on the coast of Massachusetts, the waters of the West Indies far to the south of them became infested with bands of pirates, who, from having in many cases been engaged in making and selling smoked beef or "boucan" from the wild cattle there, got the name of buccaneers. They drew to their yellow flag riffraff from the "Seven Seas" and the four quarters of the earth, and among this company was a young Welshman named Henry Morgan, who had run away from his home as a boy. His headlong fearlessness had made him second in command to the leader, Mansvelt, when, in 1667, that bold Dutchman was planning to "carve out a buccaneer republic" from the rich lands still held in Spain's loosening grip.

Mansvelt died. Morgan after sacking Puerto Principe in Cuba found himself, by virtue of his strength and ferocity, the leader of a wild band numbering about four hundred and fifty of the very scum of the earth. Setting sail in his nine small ships, he landed in Costa Rica. When the pirates found that he proposed to attack the strongly fortified and garrisoned town of Puerto Bello, even this rakehell crew was dismayed. Morgan outlined his plan, appealed to their lust for plunder, and wound up with the ringing phrase: "If our numbers are small, our hearts are great!"

They captured the castle, drove the garrison into the great hall, heaped all the powder in the vault below, and blew up the whole. The fort resisted stoutly: Morgan dragged the trembling monks and nuns from the convents, put into their hands ladders which he had made, and drove them in front of his assaulting party; the commander of the fort did his duty as a soldier and in spite of this distressing barrier opened fire; the monks and nuns rushed forward in desperation, and those who were not mown down placed the ladders in position; the fort was captured; and for two weeks the pirates pillaged the hapless town.

Morgan sent to De Guzman, Governor of Panama, demanding a great ransom for the inhabitants, and when the Governor replied with an armed force, he ambushed it and forced it to retreat. The terrified citizens got together the ransom and Morgan sailed away, promising De Guzman to pay him a visit next year. That remarkable officer sent word he had better not try it, and accompanied this warning with a gift of a superb ring of emeralds!

With the help of the English Governor of Jamaica, who contributed a fine war-ship from New England, the *Oxford*, Morgan made ready for a descent upon the Spanish settlements in Venezuela. A French vessel, the *Flying Stag*, came along and he captured her by strategy without firing a gun. Sailing with fifteen ships and eight hundred men, half his force broke away on the high seas, but Morgan pressed on with the other half, captured the town of Gibraltar with great booty, and entered the strait leading to the lake and city of Maracaibo. He presently found his fleet "bottled up" by a strong fort and by three Spanish men-of-war mounting nearly a hundred guns between them. Mor-



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Morgan found himself, by virtue of his strength and ferocity, the leader of a wild band

From a drawing by Howard Pyle

gan built a fire-ship, crammed with powder, brimstone, and tar, and showing guns and figures of men, made of logs; with this in the lead, he bore down upon the Spaniards, who, believing the fire-vessel to be the pirate flag-ship, waited till they could sink it at one broadside. Before they woke up, the dangerous craft was fast to their galleon. It burst into flames, the venturesome crew leaped overboard, and while the Spaniards were fighting the fire, Morgan sailed up and annihilated them.

His first attack on the fort failed; anchoring in sight, he went through the pretense of landing a force for a shore attack; the garrison at once set to work and laboriously shifted their cannon to that side to cover the expected assault. The wily pirate drifted down with his ships that night, undiscovered till he was close to the walls; before the heavy guns of the fort could be moved back to bear on him, he was safely past and bound for the high seas.

Emboldened by his successes, the buccaneer now decided to carry out his boast of bearding De Guzman in his own capital of Panama. His fame brought a swarm of dare-devils to his flag from every town of the Spanish Main; several ships from New England joined him; the flag-ship (the same *Flying Stag* which Morgan had captured from the French) was furnished by the Governor of Jamaica and flew the English flag, while Morgan's colors were a red banner with a white cross, and a bow flag of red, white, and blue; it was by far the largest and most nearly lawful expedition he had commanded, there being over two thousand men on the thirty-seven vessels.

They captured the fortifications at St. Catherine's Island, and stormed the redoubtable castle of St.

Lawrence that commanded the mouth of the Chagres River, along which their route lay; this mountain fort was impregnable on the waterside, but the pirates hewed a path through the tangled woods with their cutlasses, crawled across the open on their hands and knees in the face of a terrific fire from cannon and sharpshooters, and strove desperately all day to carry the palisades at the top. The leader, Bradley, with both legs broken, still urged on the assault; that night another party attempted a surprise: one, a Frenchman, received an Indian arrow in the shoulder; dragging it from his flesh, he wrapped some lint around it and fired it from his musket; it struck a dry roof, and in a moment the building was ablaze; in spite of a desperate resistance, the fort was taken and the garrison killed, a score of prisoners and wounded only being left out of three hundred and fifty Spaniards.

For physical hardihood these buccaneers were veritable Berserkers: one wounded man, when the surgeon hesitated, because of the dreadful agony, to remove an arrow from his eye, tore it out himself, tied a rag around his head, and rushed into the fight once more. They left two hundred of their number dead, and several ships were wrecked in the harbor through carelessness.

Nothing daunted, Morgan set out with thirteen hundred followers for the march across the Isthmus, some in boats, some on the shore. But for the sordid motives, that feat would be an epic worthy of a great poet. Their provisions gave out before they were well started, till, ravenous with hunger, they soaked and cooked old leather bags they found, cutting them into pieces small enough to swallow; they eagerly devoured the cats and dogs they killed in the deserted streets of Cruz; they slept on the wet ground; their clothing

speedily became rags and tatters; they were ambushed by Indians. Still Morgan held them together and drove them forward by his fiery will. After ten days of this they repeated the experience of Balboa: gaining the summit of a mountain, still called Buccaneers' Hill, they saw the shining waters of the Pacific, and knew they were drawing near their quarry.

The ragged, starved pirates forgot their miseries. Hastening down the slopes they came upon great herds of cattle and feasted upon the half-cooked flesh like savages. That evening their eager eyes beheld the steeples of the capital in the distance.

Panama was a city of thirty thousand, the rendezvous of the Spanish treasure-fleets, "the strongest, richest, most magnificent city in the New World." The buccaneers found themselves next morning facing an army five times their size, half of them seasoned Spanish cavalry and foot-soldiers, while back of this array frowned the big guns of the city forts. The invaders began to waver at the prospect. To add to their dismay, the enemy had an extraordinary contingent of two hundred fierce bulls, who bellowed and pawed the earth and could hardly be held by the negroes and Indians who managed them.

Morgan braced them with a burst of flaming confidence, and when their courage was somewhat revived, he reminded them they had only two choices: to defeat the Spanish or to die. With two hundred sharpshooters in advance, he led them down the slope in three battalions.

The Spanish cavalry charged, but they were adroitly decoyed into marshy ground and while in confusion were riddled by the marksmen. As the main forces engaged, the bulls were turned loose. But the invaders

knew something of cattle stampedes: they actually turned the animals, headed them back for the Spanish infantry, and charged behind the flying hoofs, which swept dismay and destruction through the ranks of their owners. The Spanish line was broken, the army fled in disorder.

Calling his men from the slaughter, Morgan hastened to get between the scattered remnants and the city; the defenses were stormed; the streets were cleared in hand-to-hand fighting; when the sun went down, Morgan was master of Panama.

For four weeks he had his will of the place. Then, having suppressed one or two mutinies with a stern hand, he marched out, leaving behind a ruined city, and bearing a booty of two million dollars in gold, besides silks, arms, merchandise—everything that could be transported. The leader returned to Jamaica, settled down as a capitalist, was knighted by Charles II, and was for a time acting Governor of the island. But his just reward overtook him, and when the King died, he was thrown into prison, where he probably ended his days.

If ever there was a case of the misuse of superb qualities of manhood, it was that of Henry Morgan. And in spite of his crimes, his savage cruelty, no one who reads the story of his Homeric march against Panama can doubt his claim to a place among the bravest fighting leaders.

CHAPTER XII

A YANKEE TREASURE-HUNTER WHO BECAME GOVERNOR

TWENTY-FIVE years after the Puritans landed at Boston there was a family named Phips living on the edge of the Maine wilderness at the mouth of the Kennebec River. There were twenty-six children in the pioneer cabin—which must have been pretty full, for twenty-one of them were boys. The father died; there were no schools; and the youngsters ran wild on the wooded peninsula at Woolwich which jutted out into Monseag Bay. The Indians were all about, and the settlers lived in daily fear of the war-whoop of raiding bands.

One of the youngest of the big Phips brood was named William. His job was to tend the flock of sheep; and he did not do much else till he was eighteen—except grow strong in body and resolute in mind beyond any of his twenty brothers.

These swelling powers could not be contented with a shepherd's life: he apprenticed himself to a ship's carpenter in the near-by settlement, and in four years his hard work made him master of his trade.

He must have begun to dream dreams in those early days. There were no books or newspapers, but the sailormen he met brought tales of adventure by sea, of the naval fights between the English and Dutch, of the privateers and pirates beginning to swarm in the West Indies, of the scores of lost Spanish treasure-ships in those waters.

Like any vigorous young man Phips drank in these tales; but he went a step farther than most, for he made up his mind that here was a golden field where a boy from the Maine backwoods had as good a chance as an English lord, if his heart were but stout enough. And, as one who knew him, the great Cotton Mather, wrote years afterward: "He was of an inclination cutting rather like a hatchet than a razor; he would propose very considerable matters and then so cut through them that no difficulties could put by the edge of his resolution. Being then of the true temper for doing of great things, he betakes himself to the sea, the right scene for such exploits."

First, however, he betook himself to Boston, worked at his trade, learned for the first time to read and write, and presently, at the age of twenty-three, married a buxom widow. He contracted to build a vessel at his former home on the Sheepscot River; but just as he finished it the Indians attacked the settlement—and instead of his expected return lading of lumber, Phips had to carry off the terrified settlers to save them from the savages.

Though his affairs were embarrassed by this miscarriage, he "would frequently tell the gentlewoman, his wife, that he should yet be captain of a King's ship; that he should come to have the command of better men than he now accounted himself, that he would be the owner of a fair brick house in the Green Lane of north Boston; and that it might be even that would not be all that the providence of God would bring him to. She entertained these passages with sufficient incredulity, but he had so serious and positive an expectation of them that it is not easy to say what was the original thereof."

It was small wonder that the "gentlewoman"—a captain's daughter and formerly quite wealthy—thought her poor carpenter-husband somewhat overconfident; and when at thirty-two, he finally got a crazy ship, "not much unlike that the Dutchmen stamped on their first coins with the words about it, 'None can tell where Fate will bear me,'" and sailed southward on some rumor of a wrecked vessel off the Bahamas, it must have seemed like a crack-brain effort to reach these ambitions.

These waters were full of pirates who would slit a man's throat for the coat he wore; but Phips cruised about, actually found his wreck, and salvaged a little money from it. More important still, he heard of another galleon "with a mighty treasure" which had been wrecked off Hispaniola (San Domingo) half a century before.

His slender resources were inadequate for this enterprise. He boldly sailed for England hoping to interest the King or some great lord in the venture.

In spite of his poverty, ignorance, and lack of friends, his enthusiasm and persistence and "some small tokens of treasure" from his first voyage aroused interest in a court which remembered the exploits of Drake and Raleigh some generations before. The Duke of York, then High Admiral, induced King James to give the bold adventurer a small frigate, the *Rose-Algier*, in which to prosecute his search; so that in 1685 Phips found one of his rash prophecies fulfilled, and himself the captain of a King's ship of eighteen guns and ninety-five men.

He sailed away in high hopes. But there were some more hard years ahead of him.

His crew was a lawless band, attracted by the hopes

of Spanish gold; the months of cruising about on false trails, the hard labor and lack of proper implements, the perpetual disappointments, drove them to thoughts of the better chances in a piratical cruise.

These mutterings grew to open mutiny: with drawn swords they came at the captain, threatening him with death if he refused to join in this pirate expedition.

But they had mistaken their man. "Though he had not so much of a weapon as an ox-goad or a jaw-bone in his hand, yet like another Shamgar or Samson, with most undaunted fortitude, did he rush upon them and with blows of his bare hands felled them and quelled the rest."

Overawed for the moment, the mutineers bided their time and plotted a more effectual rising. It was found necessary to clean the bottom of the vessel, foul with many months in the tropical seas, and she was beached at a desolate Spanish island, a bridge being laid to the land by which the stores could be unloaded.

The men were given shore-leave for a time; but no sooner were they out of sight than the rogues "entered into an agreement which they signed in a ring (round-robin fashion) that about seven o'clock that evening they would seize the captain and those eight or ten which they knew to be true to him, and leave them to perish on the island, and so be gone away into the South Seas to seek their fortune. . . . These knaves considering that they should want a carpenter with them in that villainous expedition, sent a messenger to fetch unto them the carpenter who was then at work upon the vessel; and unto him they showed their articles; telling him what he must look for if he did not subscribe among them.

"The carpenter, being an honest fellow, did with

much importunity prevail for one half-hour's time to consider the matter; and returning to work upon the vessel, with a spy by them set upon him, he feigned himself suddenly taken with a fit of the colic, for the relief whereof he suddenly ran in to the captain in the great cabin for a dram. Where, when he came, his business was only in brief to tell the captain of the horrible distress which he has fallen into; but the captain bids him as briefly return to the rogues in the woods and sign their articles and leave him to provide for the rest.

"The carpenter was no sooner gone than Captain Phips, calling together the few friends that were left him aboard, whereof the gunner was one, demanded of them whether they would stand by him in this extremity, whereto they replied they would stand by him if he could save them, and he answered, 'by the help of God he did not fear it.' All their provisions had been carried ashore to a tent made for that purpose about which they had placed several great guns to defend it in case of an assault by the Spaniards. Wherefore Captain Phips immediately ordered those guns to be silently drawn and turned; and so pulling up the bridge, he charged his great guns aboard and brought them to bear on every side of the tent.

"By this time the army of rebels came out of the woods; but as they drew near to the tent of provisions, they saw such a change of circumstances that they cried out: '*We are betrayed!*' And they were soon confirmed in it when they heard the captain with a stern fury call to them: '*Stand off, ye wretches, at your peril!*' He quickly cast them into more than ordinary confusion when they saw him ready to fire his great guns upon them.

"And when he had signified unto them his resolve to

abandon them all unto the desolation which they had proposed for him, he caused the bridge to be again laid, and his men began to take the provisions on board. When the wretches beheld what was coming upon them, they fell upon their knees protesting that they had never had anything against him, except only his unwillingness to go away with the King's ship upon the South Sea design. But upon all other accounts they would choose rather to live and die with him than with any man in the world. However, when they saw how much he was dissatisfied at it, they would insist upon it no more and humbly begged his pardon. And when he judged that he had kept them on their knees long enough, he having first secured their arms, received them aboard, but he immediately weighed anchor, and arriving at Jamaica, turned them off."

At Hispaniola Phips succeeded in making friends with an ancient Spaniard who remembered all about the wreck they were seeking, and who was finally induced to tell its exact location, on a reef a few miles north of Port de la Plata—which town had its very name from the arrival there long before of a shipwrecked party with a boat-load of silver plate saved from their frigate.

With only this to show for his expedition, Phips had to return to England, the *Rose-Algier* being out of repair and not half manned. The admiralty would not renew his commission, but nothing could daunt the treasure-seeker now that he believed he really knew the whereabouts of his prize. He managed to induce the Duke of Albemarle and some friends to fit out a small vessel for him, and obtain a patent from the King giving them all wrecks discovered for a number of years.

During the wearisome delays, Phips designed and helped to make some rough drags and hooks for exploring the bottom. His indomitable spirit conquered all obstacles: sooner than would have seemed possible, he was back at Port de la Plata in the little *James and Mary*, with another smaller craft as tender.

His first task was to make a great dugout canoe from a cottonwood-tree, "so large as to carry eight or ten oars, for the making of which perigua (as they call it) he did, with the same industry that he did everything else, employ his own hand and adze, and endure no little hardships, lying abroad in the woods many nights together."

This canoe was used by the native divers who lived in the tender, and day after day Phips sent out several trusted men with these half-amphibious Indians, diving and dredging along the shoals pointed out by the old Spaniard. This reef was called the Boilers; and though the rock came within a few feet of the surface, it dropped off sheer into fifty feet of water on the far side.

As weeks went by with no reward for their anxious toil, all lost courage except the leader, who so firmly believed in his informant and in his own destiny that he carried the whole party along from one exertion to another. And at last capricious fortune seemed to relent toward the suitor who had proved steadfast through so many rebuffs for these long years.

The canoe had finished its allotted task one day and was returning to report the usual failure. One of the men, gazing over the side, saw in the water below a particularly beautiful coral "sea-feather," with gay-colored long plumes, hanging on the face of the perpendicular reef.

Thinking they might as well take something back with them, he ordered a diver to fetch it up.

The Indian plunged overboard. They could see him break away the graceful growth. Then he seemed to pause, holding on to the rough rock.

In an instant he shot up to the surface. Dashing the dripping water from his face he began to jabber excitedly: in a breathless silence, one translated his statement that he had "perceived a number of great guns in the watery world where he had found the feather; the report of which great guns exceedingly astonished the whole company; and at once turned their despondencies for their ill success into assurances that they had now lit upon the true spot of ground which they had been looking for; and they were further confirmed in these assurances when upon further diving the Indian fetched up a *sow*, as they styled it, or a lump of silver worth perhaps two or three hundred pounds. Upon this they prudently buoyed the place that they might readily find it again: and they went back to their captain, whom for some while they distressed with nothing but such bad news as they formerly thought they must have carried him. Nevertheless, they so slipped the sow of silver on one side under the table (where they were now sitting with the captain and hearing him express his resolutions to wait still patiently upon the providence of God under these disappointments) that when he should look upon one side, he might see that odd thing before him. At last he saw it and cried out with some agony:

"*What is this? Whence comes this?*" And then with changed countenance they told him how and where they got it. Then said he: *'Thanks be to God! We are made!'* And so away they went, all hands to

work, wherein they had this further piece of remarkable prosperity, that whereas if they had first fallen upon that part of the Spanish wreck where the pieces of eight had been stowed in bags among the ballast, they had seen more laborious and less enriching times of it. Now, most happily, they first fell upon that room in the wreck where the bullion had been stored up, and then so prospered in this new fishery, that in a little while they had without the loss of any man's life brought up *thirty-two tons* of silver, for it was now come to measuring silver by tons."

Phips drove his men hard, the sailors on deck hammering several inches of incrustated limestone from the treasure. "They knocked out whole bushels of pieces of eight which were grown thereunto. Besides that incredible treasure of plate in various forms, thus fetched up from seven or eight fathoms under water, there were vast riches of gold and pearls and jewels, which they also lit upon; and indeed for a more comprehensive invoice I must but summarily say: *All that a Spanish frigate was to be enriched withal.*"

This vast treasure, worth nearly a million and a half of dollars, almost produced another mutiny. Phips, however, promised that every man should receive a share, even if it had to come out of his own portion—an engagement which he honorably carried out. Not daring to stop at any port, even for provisions, he set sail for England and turned this dazzling booty safely over to his backers.

His own share, with the large deduction for the seamen, was only eighty thousand dollars. But this was a fortune for those days; and with it, a gold cup worth another five thousand presented by the Duke to Mrs. Phips, and the order of knighthood bestowed by the

King, the triumphant adventurer sailed back to New England in 1688, resisting many fair offers of advancement if he would remain in London.

I should like to have seen the face of "that gentlewoman, his wife," who had been so incredulous at her carpenter-husband's dreams, when Sir William Phips presented her that gold cup from the great Duke, and told her of the "sea change" that had come upon him!

They had their fair brick house in the Green Lane (corner of Charter and Salem Streets, Boston) and the stout-hearted Sir William went on to become Governor of Massachusetts and to capture Port Royal. But nothing in his romantic career was more striking than that valiant quest for the Spanish treasure off Port de la Plata.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MAN WHO CONQUERED AN EMPIRE

ONE summer evening, nearly four hundred years ago, a man stood on a rocky headland looking out over the Gulf of Mexico. The sun was setting over the tangled tropical forest to the west, and he had removed his steel helmet to enjoy the sea-breeze which was fanning away the fierce heat, and stirring the blue-green waters of the bay whose shores curved around beneath him. A tall pyramid of rough bricks towered behind him, with a flight of stone steps leading to a platform, on which a fire shot up wavering flames and smoke in the gathering twilight.

The cavalier rested one steel-clad arm on the saddle of his bay horse, which turned its head inquiringly toward the motionless figure of its master. He was in the early thirties, tall, slender, with large dark eyes, now fixed on the waters of the bay, and with an expression of great resolution on his face. Upon his steel breastplate gleamed a huge emerald in a heavy gold setting, curiously wrought into the figure of an eagle bearing in his talons a serpent; this single ornament hung from his neck by a gold chain. As still and silent as the sacred pyramid itself, he watched several boats, heavily loaded with sails, spars, anchors, and rigging of all sorts, which were being rowed toward shore from a little fleet of five ships that rode the rippling waters.

Presently, the last boat, rapidly forced along by several sailors, left the side of the largest vessel, which, like all the rest save one little caravel, was stripped to bare masts. The watchful figure on the headland stiffened, and bent forward, as if in expectation of something. While he looked, the deserted vessels began to move slowly, drifting before the wind. The man never took his gaze from them. Suddenly, the bow of the largest rose high in the air. She heeled over to one side, quivering like a desperately wounded thing. Then, slowly, the hull began to disappear beneath the surface. Down, down, she went, till the tips of the masts sank out of sight.

Another followed, and another. It was like a flock of injured water-fowl diving. In a few minutes the waters of the bay were bare of life, except for the tiny caravel, still bobbing at anchor, and for the group of boats steadily approaching the shore. The man stood a while longer; then he turned impulsively toward the golden glow in the west, stretching forth his arm. Vaulting into his saddle, he rode rapidly away southward into the darkness.

The cavalier's name was Hernando Cortés. The ships were his own, sunk by his order—and five others had been destroyed just before in the same way. He was in a strange land, untrodden by any white man, among savage and hostile Indians; and he had thus deliberately cut off the only means of return to civilization for himself and his little band of comrades.

And why did he commit an act of such madness? It was the end of the first act in the most amazing romance of history, and the story up to this point shows the kind of man it was who made an immortal name for himself and his men in this incredible expedition.

Hernando Cortés had been a boy of seven when the news of Columbus's discovery of the New World excited the mind of every man in Spain and all Europe. He showed no signs of greatness in his youth; indeed, his parents were much distressed by his idleness at school and college. He was not even a healthy boy; but he grew stronger as he got older, and became noted for his frolicsome disorders. At seventeen his fancy was taken with the venturesome exploits of his country's famous soldiers; and, after missing one chance to sail for the West Indies by a humiliating misadventure in a love-affair, he finally went to Hispaniola at the age of nineteen. Having spent seven years as a planter, he joined the expedition which conquered Cuba in 1511, and soon managed to get into the bad graces of Velasquez, the Governor. Escaping from prison twice, and narrowly missing death both by hanging and drowning, he succeeded in regaining the friendship of the Governor, married a beautiful girl, and settled down as a prosperous planter and miner. For eight years more he followed this peaceful life, growing wealthy, and becoming *alcalde* or magistrate. Then, toward the end of 1518, the whole colony was aroused by the return of Pedro de Alvarado, who had gone with Grijalva, the Governor's nephew, to follow up the discovery of Yucatan the previous year by Cordova. Alvarado brought back gold ornaments and jewels worth a quarter of a million dollars, obtained from the natives in exchange for a few glass beads, pins, and scissors. Velasquez, in great excitement, decided to send out a larger expedition, and Cortés managed, through his friendship with the Governor's secretary and the royal treasurer, to get appointed as the leader.

This was the real birth of the great Cortés. He spent

all his own money, pledged his estates, exhausted his credit, borrowed from his friends, bought vessels, stores, and arms, enlisted recruits, with an energy, enthusiasm, and good judgment of which his former years had given no promise. Before he was ready, the Governor's distrust of him returned. Learning that he was to be deprived of the command, Cortés set sail from St. Jago (Santiago) that very night, waving a farewell from his boat to the outwitted Velasquez. At three other Cuban ports he got stores and enlisted recruits; he seized a ship and persuaded the captain to join him; Velasquez tried to have him detained at Trinidad and Havana, but Cortés won over the commandants of both places, and finally set sail, February 18, 1519, with less than six hundred soldiers, of whom thirty-two had crossbows and thirteen carried the clumsy arquebuses which served in place of our rifles. He had also fourteen cannon and sixteen horses, the last proving of surprising importance.

Landing on the coast of Yucatan, the little army presently defeated a horde of forty thousand Tabascan Indians with terrific slaughter, and made their way with much difficulty along the coast. In a short time their eyes were opened to what lay before them. The Tabascans told them that the gold ornaments they saw came from the west, from "Mexico"; and proceeding along the shore till they reached the spot now occupied by the city of Vera Cruz, they learned from the natives that their province was part of the great Mexican empire ruled over by Montezuma. Through the Governor of the province Cortés sent a request to this Emperor that he might deliver in person a message from the Emperor of Spain—and while this was refused by the mysterious monarch three times, the embassies which

returned brought presents that dazzled the eyes of the Spaniards: among them gold and precious stones in quantity and workmanship almost beyond belief. One gold and silver plate, "as large as a carriage-wheel," represented the sun, being richly carved with figures of plants and animals. This was valued at a quarter of a million dollars.

In spite of Montezuma's refusal to see him, Cortés was only the more determined after this to probe this mystery to the heart. For he was urged on irresistibly by thoughts of unbounded glory and riches, as well as the religious duty of converting these heathen to the true faith. He was continually dreading that Velasquez or the Spanish Government would send over some one to take his place and snatch this marvellous opportunity from him; but he formed his audacious plan and followed it as coolly as if there were not a doubt of his position. In spite of the opposition of the friends of Velasquez in his own party, who insisted he should return to Cuba, he managed affairs so that his soldiers demanded the founding of a colony in the name of Spain; and the new officials of the new town of Villa Rica de Vera Cruz at once appointed him Captain-General.

With this shadow of authority, with gold, and by the force of his own character and enthusiasm, he got his followers in hand again. Most adroitly he made an alliance with the Totonacs, a neighboring tribe who, he found, wished to throw off the yoke of Montezuma. He contrived at the start to make them offer an open insult to the Mexican Emperor; and, helped by these allies, a Spanish town arose as if by magic close to their chief city of Cempoala—with "fort, granary, town house, temple, and public buildings." Cortés thus

had a safe headquarters among friends. (Immediately thereafter, by the way, he risked the success of the whole undertaking by forcibly destroying the idols in one of his new friends' chief temples—actually succeeding in substituting the forms of his own religion !)

Next he sent a letter to the Emperor of Spain, along with the princely treasures from Montezuma, begging for a confirmation of his acts and his position, so that he should no longer fear what Velasquez might do.

But just as he felt everything was ready for his venture, a conspiracy came to light in his ranks: one of the members confessed that this party was to seize one of the vessels that very night and return to Cuba. They had provisions, water, and all necessities on board, and but for the weakening of this man must have succeeded in their plan.

Realizing the dangers he must expect perpetually from this source, Cortés came to a bold decision, resulting in the scene with which our story began: he had his pilots report that the ships were in such bad condition as to be unsafe; and, removing the sails, anchors, and the like, nine of the ten vessels were sunk by his order. Under all the circumstances, it was an almost unparalleled act of resolve, and well showed the steely courage of the Great Conquistador.

II

When the soldiers, twelve miles away at Cempoala, heard that the ships were sunk, they were thunderstruck. The faint-hearted began to murmur that the general had betrayed them; the despairing protests became outspoken; and it seemed as if the leader's enemies would surely triumph with this weapon he had

put into their hands. But Cortés showed himself, as before, the master mind. Addressing the men with the rough eloquence he understood so well, he presently turned their minds from fears for their return to a wild enthusiasm for advancing on this marvellous country, whose ruler could bestow on strangers such superb gifts. "They testified the revulsion of their feelings by making the air ring with their shouts: 'To Mexico! To Mexico!'" Accordingly on August 16, 1519, the audacious little band of four hundred foot-soldiers and fifteen horse, with seven cannon and some Indian allies, struck out to the west.

The first day they passed through plantations of banana, vanilla, cocoa, and cochineal; through primeval trees of vast height, loaded with a tangle of orchids and other parasites, with grape-vines and convolvuli—amid which flew gaudy, shrieking parrots, strange toucans, myriads of wonderfully colored butterflies, and all the richness of the sea-level tropics. Then they began the mountain climb to the vast table-lands, finding themselves amid fields of corn and the products of the temperate zone, with forests of oak and pine. From the city of Xalapa (from which our drug of jalap gets its name) they saw the great Sierra Madre Mountains, and snow-crowned Orizaba ("Star-mountain") towering to its seventeen thousand three hundred and sixty-eight feet. Then came three exhausting days of travel past volcanic mountains, amid storms of sleet and rain; and on the high table-land beyond, the plant life had again changed to fields and hedges of cactus, and of the invaluable aloe with its yellow flowers (which furnishes drink and clothing). The chief of the province received them coldly and gave them impressive details of Montezuma's grandeur, stating that the

Emperor could muster from his thirty vassals an army of three million men, and that twenty thousand human victims were sacrificed on his altars each year. He may have thought to frighten the adventurers into retreat. But says old Bernal Diaz, one of the party: "The words which we heard, however they may have filled us with wonder, made us—such is the temper of the Spaniard—only the more earnest to prove the adventure, desperate as it might appear."

They were advised at the next town to pass through the republic of Tlascala, whose mountaineers were still unconquered by the Mexicans; so sending ahead Indian messengers, they passed a week later the huge stone wall marking the boundary of that country. A few leagues farther on, while pursuing a small party of Indians, they were attacked by a body of several thousand, who made so fierce an onslaught that they killed two of the horses, and were only routed by the muskets and crossbows.

In spite of a visit from two Tlascalcan envoys, assuring them of a friendly reception, the Spaniards spent a watchful night, and advanced next day in strict order. Dispersing a small band who confronted them, they were drawn by these into a narrow passage, where neither the cavalry nor the cannon could operate; and as they turned an angle of this defile, they saw before them a great army of tens of thousands of warriors, whose bright plumes and banners were dominated by an ensign showing a heron on a rock.

With their piercing war-whistle and the *boom* of many drums, the Indians closed in upon the little company. Their repeated onslaughts were so savage that one horseman was killed, and it looked as if the Spaniards would never force their way through; but,

inspired by the spirit of their leader, they finally forced the enemy back out of the pass. With room to use cannon, they soon spread death and terror among the savages, who, brave as they were, could not stand before the sulphurous thunders of these unknown weapons; and having suffered heavy losses, including eight chiefs, the Tlascalans withdrew in good order. Cortés spent that night in a stone temple on a rocky hill, caring for his wounded, planning for the morrow, wondering if his whole advance must be in the face of such a stubborn foe.

It did not lessen his care to receive next day a defiant message from the chief Xicotencatl, who was reported to have fifty thousand warriors with him. The invaders, he said, might reach the city of Tlascala, but once there, their flesh would be hewn from them as a sacrifice to the gods. It was a solemn company that received absolution that night from the priest. Honest Diaz says, "We feared death, for we were men"—and this kind of death had few attractions even for the danger-loving adventurers.

It was on the 5th of September when they confronted the array of painted battalions, a sea of feathers, plumes, gold ornaments, fantastic head-pieces, and copper-headed spears, the great gold eagle of Tlascala spreading his wings above the lesser ensigns. The battle began with a shower of Indian arrows that "darkened the sun." Despite a most destructive volley from the Spanish guns, the savages charged upon the invaders, breaking their ranks and sweeping them away by sheer force of numbers. The voice of Cortés was drowned in the clamor. It looked as if the rash expedition would meet with its end then and there.

But the seasoned warriors fought with the energy

of desperation. The cannon hurled balls upon the enemy's flank. Cortés at the head of his cavalry charged into the thick of the press. The Tlascalans were beaten back again and again. After several hours a rivalry caused one chief to withdraw with ten thousand men; and the Tlascalan leader was forced to retreat.

This redoubtable warrior was still undismayed, however, by his defeat, or by the terrible cannon, or the horses which filled the common soldiers with such awe and terror. He urged the council to reject Cortés's proposals of peace next day, and, contrary to custom and the laws of country, planned a night attack which should catch the strangers unawares.

Cortés heard nothing of this; but his men always slept with their arms beside them, and the horses were saddled by night as by day. On the appointed night, a sentinel saw a dark mass approaching in the moonlight. He gave the alarm. In five minutes the camp was ready for battle; and with characteristic audacity Cortés decided to attack instead of awaiting the foe. As the Indians reached the rising ground, the Spaniards dashed down upon them, threw them into utter confusion, and pursued them till weary of killing.

It was enough. The council of lords submitted their country to these terrible, invincible beings; and the alliance, faithfully kept by the Indians through all sorts of dangers and reverses, proved of the first importance later on.

Cortés here rested his men, quelled the beginnings of another mutiny among those who had had all the fighting and hardships they cared for, and received a fourth embassy from Montezuma. This brought three thousand ounces of gold, hundreds of feather-work

mantles, and other gifts—but still refused him admittance to Mexico. The vacillating Emperor followed this up presently with another, also bearing rich presents, this time inviting the Spaniards to come to the capital, urging them to make no alliance with the barbarous Tlascalans, and suggesting the route by way of Cholula, where, he said, they would be received as his guests.

Against the advice of the Tlascalans, Cortés proceeded to that city, which had formally tendered him its submission. It was of great antiquity, having been founded by the people who preceded the Aztecs then ruling the land; it was believed to have been the abode, after leaving Mexico, of the Fair God (Quetzalcoatl), whose coming again was universally expected—a belief to which the Spaniards owed much of their astounding success, since it became generally supposed that they were at least messengers from this long-expected deity; and it contained the most famous temple in the land, a pyramid of bricks and clay a hundred and seventy-seven feet high and twice as long as the great pyramid of Cheops in Egypt (fourteen hundred and twenty-three feet). Thousands of human victims, according to the horrible custom of the country, were sacrificed each year before the altar of this “god of the air,” above whose dark face was a crown “waving with plumes of fire,” about his neck a collar of gold, great turquoises in his ears, a jewelled sceptre in one hand, and a curiously painted shield on his arm.

From Cholula the ardent Spaniards could see, beyond hundreds of towers, beyond the beautiful gardens, forests, and cultivated fields, two vast volcanoes guarding the pass to Mexico: Popocatepetl, “the mountain that smokes,” and Iztaccihuatl, “the white woman.”

The first reception was most hospitable. The weary Spaniards enjoyed to the full the luxuries and novelties of this highly civilized city. But the sharp eye of Cortés soon detected a change in the attitude of his hosts that put him on the alert; and the faithful Indian girl from the coast, Marina, who had acted as interpreter, presently brought an alarming tale. The Spaniards were to be attacked suddenly as they left the city, various barricades having been erected to throw them into disorder, and a force of twenty thousand Mexicans was outside the city to make sure of exterminating the little band. Cholula was a trap, and the Spaniards were fast in its jaws.

In this alarming situation, Cortés met guile with guile. Making absolutely sure of the fact, he bade the chiefs of the nation to a conference at his headquarters. They came, secure in the belief that their plot was secret.

When they entered the great square courtyard, they found all the gates guarded and the Spanish soldiers drawn up along the walls. Cortés at once charged them with the conspiracy, showing that he knew all the details. In a voice of thunder he denounced their treachery, declaring that he proposed to make such an example of them as should never be forgotten.

At a signal, the soldiers poured a volley from muskets and crossbows into the huddled mass of Cholutans. They were killed almost to a man, the only ones who escaped hiding under the dead bodies; with the aid of the Tlascalalan allies, Cortés soon put down the aroused citizens, and set fire to the temple, while the Tlascalans, against his orders, plundered the city.

After restoring quiet, freeing the captives reserved for sacrifice, and receiving another embassy from the

thoroughly alarmed Montezuma—who denied having any share in the plot, and sent as usual gold, jewels, and other valuables—Cortés again took up his march toward Mexico. The road led between the two great volcanoes, Popocatepetl belching up its threatening smoke from its snowy cone three thousand feet higher than the tallest mountain of Europe. Sleet and snow and icy winds made the difficult passage still harder, but when on the second day they suddenly looked out and down to behold spread out before them the exquisite panorama of the Valley of Mexico, all remembrance of their hardships and perils vanished: there, amid beautiful lakes and hills and gardens lay the capital of Montezuma.

As they saw its charm, its richness, and thought of what it must contain, they cried out: "It is the Promised Land." With fresh enthusiasm, but exercising the greatest caution, they made their way down, and were welcomed in the name of Montezuma by the King of Tezcucó as the Emperor's representative. Every step showed a fresh marvel: the handsome houses, often built on piles out above the lake; the great stone causeways running for miles across the water and wide enough for eight horsemen abreast; the floating islands, natural and artificial, with trees, houses, and gardens; the vast population and swarms of canoes; the fertile irrigated fields and multitude of flowers; the royal palace of Iztapalapan, with its botanical gardens, aviary, and fish-basin nearly a mile in circumference; it was like a descent into fairyland. The battered adventurers felt as if they were being transported bodily among the wonders of some of the old romances.

On the eighth day of November, 1519, at a fort on

the great causeway about a mile from the city, Montezuma met them, in all the splendor of a barbaric Emperor. He was in the royal palanquin, blazing with gold, borne on the shoulders of nobles. His canopy of bright feathers, adorned with jewels and silver, was carried by four more lords. As he advanced, in a cloak sprinkled with pearls and precious stones, the attendants placed mats before him that the golden soles of his sandals might not touch the earth.

Greeting the visitors like the great monarch he was, Montezuma had them conducted past the swarming myriads of onlookers into the city. Here with his own royal hands he hung a massive collar of gold about the neck of Cortés, and presented to him the palace of Axayacatl, which was to be the Spaniards' quarters. This huge structure offered accommodations for the whole "army." And, as the ever-watchful eye of Cortés at once discovered, it was also an admirable fortress which could be defended against almost any odds.

III .

Here then were our adventurers, at the goal to which they had cut their bloody path through the hordes of one tribe after another. It did not take long for them to find out that in wealth and splendor this hitherto fabulous capital surpassed their fondest dreams. The great stone buildings with squares and busy market-places; the teeming throngs of people; the evidence at every turn of a surprising stage of civilization: the Aztecs, for instance, were such good astronomers that they were eleven days nearer the correct time than the Spaniards themselves, and their enormous botanical gardens were unknown in Europe till almost a genera-

tion after the Conquest; the magnificence of Montezuma's way of life: the endless kinds of food kept hot with chafing-dishes—including fish and ocean products, as well as tropical fruits brought by fast runners in twenty-four hours from the coast; his beautiful tableware—given away after a single meal; his clothing—also worn once and then given away; the host of nobles serving him barefooted and in coarse mantles, a household which required *two thousand* pitchers of the national chocolate each day; a ghastly total of yearly human sacrifices which ran into tens of thousands; all this tremendous stirring life only made more difficult the question as to what they were to do next. It was like the ardent hunter who pursues an elephant—to find himself facing a whole herd.

One little accident helped to whet their appetite, if that were needed. After a fruitless attempt to induce Montezuma to let them cast out the idols from the great temple—an impudent suggestion which outraged the Emperor beyond measure—Cortés obtained permission to convert one of the halls in the palace they occupied into a chapel for the service of their own church. In the course of these alterations, the curious Spaniards broke open a plastered door, and beheld a large hall filled with gold and silver bars, with jewels and rich stuffs.

Bernal Diaz was one of those who looked in. "I was a young man," says he, "and it seemed to me as if all the riches of the world were in that room." The door was walled up again, but the treasure-seekers never forgot what they had beheld.

To add to the perplexities of the situation, Cortés heard that the garrison he had left at Vera Cruz had been drawn into a quarrel with a neighboring chief,

and eight of them, including Escalante, the leader, had been killed—and their prisoners declared the whole affair had been planned by Montezuma.

He resolved as usual to grasp this nettle firmly. With five of his most trusted cavaliers, Alvarado, Sandoval, Lujó, De Leon, and De Avila, he called upon Montezuma, ordering thirty soldiers to drop in, three or four at a time, as if by accident.

After some casual talk, Cortés charged the Emperor with responsibility for the fate of Escalante. The surprised monarch despatched an order for all those concerned to appear at the capital. Cortés then suggested that, to prove his innocence to the Spanish Emperor, Montezuma should take up his residence at their quarters.

The indignant monarch refused. For two hours the discussion got nowhere.

Then, losing patience, De Leon cried out: "Why do we waste words? Let us seize him, and if he resists, plunge our swords into his body."

Marina, the interpreter, begged the Emperor to yield, assuring him it would mean instant death if he resisted longer.

The unhappy King, overcome by superstition as well as fear in the very midst of his power and splendor, at last yielded. He was carried in his litter to a suite of rooms in the quarters, having the extra humiliation of being obliged to quiet the crowds in the streets and assure them he was going of his own free will. His captors treated him at first with great respect, but when the chiefs who had killed Escalante arrived, and were sentenced to a horrible death, they declared they had followed Montezuma's orders—whereupon Cortés had the luckless Emperor put in irons. Though

soon released, Montezuma's once proud spirit was utterly broken by this final insult. From this time on, he was absolutely under the will of the Spaniard.

There is nothing in the wildest romances of Dumas's "Three Musketeers" which can compare with this exploit. The man who could carry through such a feat and the sinking of his ships already described, manifested a courage, not of what we consider to-day the highest order, but surely as high of its order as history has ever recorded.

IV

Cortés was now the real ruler of the Mexican Empire. He explored the country, found out where the gold was obtained, secured a better harbor on the coast, and sent De Leon with a hundred and fifty men to plant a colony. He started a great plantation for the Spanish Crown which he stocked and planted, soon having the fertile land under such cultivation that, as he wrote the Emperor of Spain (Charles V), it was already worth twenty thousand ounces of gold. And above all, he easily persuaded the passive Montezuma to acknowledge himself a vassal of Spain, receiving from the latter the treasure of Axaycatl, which the Spaniards as related had discovered by chance—a dazzling hoard of golden grains, nuggets, bars and ornaments, with jewels and precious stuffs, reaching in value the great sum of more than six million dollars. One-fifth of this was stamped with the royal arms as the share of the Spanish Crown; another fifth went to Cortés; and by the time the expenses of the expedition were taken out, there was not much left for the eager soldiers.

Six months of this dictatorship passed. Then came a thunderbolt. Word came that eighteen vessels,

bearing a thousand soldiers, sent by his old enemy Velasquez and commanded by Panfilo de Narvaez, had landed near Vera Cruz—with the avowed purpose of arresting Cortés as a traitor.

Thoroughly aroused, Cortés sped as ever to meet the greatest danger. He left Alvarado, with a hundred and forty men, to guard Montezuma as his life, and taking only seventy tried soldiers, set out by forced marches for the coast. On the way he had the good fortune to gather up, not only De Leon's band, but sixty more soldiers from the garrison at Vera Cruz who had heard the news; and with this inadequate force he pressed forward on foot to meet four times the number of his own countrymen, well supplied with cannon, arquebuses, and horses. Peremptory messages from Narvaez showed him there was no appeal except to arms. He only hastened his march.

In a terrific rain-storm, this forlorn hope reached a river three miles from the camp of Narvaez. It was a raging torrent. Encouraged by their leader, Cortés's band struggled through in the darkness and tempest, losing two men in the foaming waters. They floundered on beyond, through mud and thicket, undiscovered, for Narvaez foolishly supposed the storm to be sufficient protection. One sentinel, indeed, did rush back with news of the advance. His report was not believed; and suddenly, like a pack of famished wolves, the conquerors burst upon the astonished encampment. There was a little fierce fighting, but in half an hour Narvaez, with an eye struck out by a spear, was a captive, the garrison surrendered, and the cavalry followed their example.

Narvaez and several of his leaders were brought before Cortés in chains.

"You have great reason," said the former, "to thank fortune."

"I have much to be thankful for," was the scornful answer, "but I consider my victory over you one of the least of my achievements in this country!"

To complete the transformation, the successful general won over the soldiers who had just been arrayed against him, trebling his forces, and furnishing priceless help in guns and horses. Then he despatched one body to complete the colony before planned, a second to conquer a province to the north, and a third to dismantle the ships of Narvaez's fleet.

His triumph was soon interrupted. A message arrived from Alvarado in Mexico saying that the people had attacked him, and he was so hard beset that only speedy help could save the little garrison. Instantly Cortés prepared his troops and sped back with his thousand men two hundred miles over the mountains to the capital.

In five weeks from the time when he had set out on his desperate enterprise, he re-entered the great causeway. But the streets were now silent and deserted. Many of the bridges had been removed. The tramp of the horses' feet sounded forebodingly amid the emptiness.

The cause was soon explained. Alvarado had made the terrible mistake, under the spur of a belief in a plot against the Spaniards, of trying to imitate the massacre at Cholula: while several hundred unarmed chiefs were celebrating a great religious festival, he and his companions had rushed upon them and butchered them to the last man. Coming on top of the imprisonment of their Emperor, this had set the city in a blaze. The first direct attack on the palace had been checked by

Montezuma's appeals, but under the leadership of the Emperor's brother the whole country was aroused. The Spaniards were now blockaded, their water cut off, provisions refused. A spring had been miraculously discovered within the enclosure, but the outlook was black indeed.

"Your conduct has been that of a madman," said Cortés to Alvarado. But after a short display of exasperation, his resolute mind grappled with the task before him. His greatly increased force emboldened him; he had not experienced in person the aroused fury of the people; and he sent a despatch full of confidence to Vera Cruz. It was but a few minutes afterwards that the storm broke.

The war-whistles sounded outside the walls, and a multitude of Aztecs rushed forward upon the fortress. In spite of repeated volleys from the guns which mowed them down by hundreds, they reached the ramparts. Driven back, and failing to make a breach in the walls, they shot burning arrows which set part of the quarters on fire, and it proved necessary to throw down a portion of the defending wall to put out the flames. Only when night fell did the Mexicans withdraw.

At sunrise the Spaniards sallied forth and drove the enemy before them, till they were stopped by the barricades. These were cleared by cannon, but the Indians fought fiercely, both in the streets and from the flat roofs of the houses, casting stones and missiles of all sorts upon the soldiers. Cortés burned several hundred houses and cleared the streets, yet the enemy built up the defenses almost as fast as they were demolished.

Says Diaz: "The Mexicans fought with such ferocity that, if we had had the assistance of ten thou-

sand Hectors, and as many Orlandos, we should have made no impression on them! There were several of our troops who had served in the Italian wars, but neither there nor in the battles with the Turks had they ever seen anything like the desperation shown by these Indians."

Cortés rescued his secretary, Duero, dashing alone into a body of Mexicans and saving the man from a horrible death; and the Spaniards killed scores for every man lost on their side. Still, the prospect that night was gloomy enough. They could ill spare a single man; Cortés himself had a painful wound; the enemy's numbers seemed inexhaustible; and the leader realized for the first time what formidable foes faced him when in their present aroused state.

With much difficulty he induced Montezuma to show himself on the walls and command the people to disperse. After the first moment of instinctive obedience to their dreaded ruler, the crowd broke into execrations of him. A shower of stones and arrows flew through the air. The luckless Montezuma was carried below, badly wounded and heart-broken at the realization of his degrading position.

Next day the Spaniards stormed the great temple close to their quarters, from which the Mexicans had harassed them with deadly swarms of arrows. Cortés fastened his shield to his wounded hand and himself led the three hundred chosen. Clearing a path with the guns, he dashed up the stone steps which led around the outer face of the pyramid four times. For nearly a mile the Spaniards fought their way up this perilous path, the defenders showering arrows, spears, stones, beams, and blazing sticks upon them. Driving the enemy at last to the flat top, a fierce hand-to-hand

battle ensued in mid-air. Cortés was seized by two gigantic warriors and dragged toward the unprotected edge, with the evident intention of throwing him and themselves over the drop of a hundred and fifty feet. By a supreme effort, he tore himself loose and hurled one of his assailants to destruction. At the end of three hours, the temple was captured, the Aztecs all slain except a few priests, and the structure set on fire. But the conquerors had lost forty-five of their best men in the assault; and Cortés's attempt to gain submission in a parley met with stern defiance.

"Your little numbers are lessening," said the fierce Aztecs. "Your provisions and water are failing. The bridges are broken down, and you cannot escape."

Indeed, it looked only too probable that the Spaniards would become sacrifices to the Aztec gods, as their enemy dinned in their ears; and Cortés had to subdue the beginnings of mutiny among his despairing soldiers. He made repeated sallies, repairing the bridges, only to find them again destroyed each time. On one occasion the enemy got between him and the camp; the Spaniards were thrown into confusion; by superhuman exertions Cortés rallied the remnants; he saved himself, when the last man had crossed the bridge, only by leaping his horse over a gap six feet wide.

Utterly discouraged and worn out, the Spaniards met with the heaviest blow yet on their return: completely crushed in body and spirit, Montezuma died. Their one safeguard was removed. Nothing remained but to retreat from the city.

Cortés prepared for transport as much of the treasure as they could take, many of the soldiers loading themselves with what had to be abandoned; he built a



Montezuma wounded while commanding his people to disperse

portable bridge on which to cross the canals; and on the night of July 1, 1520, they set gloomily out in the rain through the silent streets.

Disaster awaited them. The enemy was aroused as they placed the bridge over the first canal. When they reached the second (there were three), word came from the rear that the bridge had stuck and could not be moved. They were hemmed in between the canals—and the Mexicans, in increasing numbers, attacked them savagely, each apparently content to die if he could slay or capture one of the diminishing band.

The Spaniards were thrown into utter disorder; struck down in the darkness, carried down by the gold they carried and drowned in the lake, dragged off by the swarming enemy, it became a question of each trying to save himself. Cortés with a few comrades crossed the second and the third canals, some riding, some swimming, some holding on to the horses' tails. They were comparatively safe.

But word came that the rear-guard under Alvarado was being borne down by the myriads that beset him. Nothing in the whole story is more memorable than the superb courage which those in the lead showed at this crisis. Despite the horrors behind them, they turned, galloped back, swam the canals, found Alvarado wounded and with his horse down, checked the tide for an instant till the hard-pressed handful and themselves could plunge into the lake, and won their way back—what was left of them. The mighty Alvarado, who had performed prodigies of valor, was left on the brink, the Indians around him, canoes everywhere in the water. Setting his long lance on the débris at the bottom of the canal, he vaulted into the air with the vigor of desperation and cleared the yawning gap—

a feat so incredible that the place is called "Alvarado's Leap" to this day.

Pressing on with these remnants, Cortés camped for the night in the temple on the commanding Hill of Montezuma. He had lost two-thirds of his soldiers, three-quarters of his Indian allies, most of the treasure, all his baggage, cannon, and muskets. The victorious myriads of the enemy were behind him. His brief glorious dream was shattered. No wonder that this goes in Spanish records by the name of "the melancholy night."

Hungry, wounded, exhausted, discouraged, they slowly made their way back toward Tlascala. After a week of frightful misery, but seeing only scattered parties of the enemy, they rounded a mountain wall—and beheld before them a mighty host of Mexicans stretching as far as the eye could reach. In their abject condition they felt this was the end, but they prepared to die like Spanish cavaliers.

Cortés addressed them, striving to hearten them with the memory of their glorious record. They descended the mountain into the "vast ocean of their enemies."

Every man fought like a paladin; but the deeper they cut their way, the more hopelessly they were surrounded. Their forebodings would have been realized and the "conquest" would have ended here at Otompan but for Cortés.

Anxiously scanning the enemy, he discovered at some distance the chief who commanded the Mexicans, with the distinguishing staff, bearing a golden net, attached to his back. The Spanish leader did not hesitate an instant.

"There is our mark. Follow me!" he cried to the

cavaliers nearest to him. Backed by Alvarado, Sandoval, Olid, Avila, and a few others, he set spurs to his tired horse and charged straight through the mass. Nothing could stop this fiery onset; in a few moments they reached the chief. Cortés dashed aside his guards and thrust him through with the lance which had done such execution. Juan de Sandoval leaped from his horse, killed the fallen leader, tore away his golden banner, and handed it to Cortés.

The loss of their general broke the enemy's ranks. They turned to flee. The Spaniards hunted them till they were weary, killing thousands. With renewed spirits and spoils of much value, they set out once more, and a few days later reached Tlascala, where, to the eternal credit of their allies, they were received as warmly as if they had never suffered so disastrous a reverse as that of "the melancholy night."

V

The soldiers thought only of resting here till they could again take up the retreat to Vera Cruz: their fondest hope was that they might still manage to reach Cuba alive. They did not yet know the temper of their leader. He had lost the use of two fingers on his left hand and had two wounds in the head, one so alarming that a piece of bone had to be removed, leaving him helpless and fevered in bed for several days. He learned that a large amount of his gold had been captured by the enemy and fifty soldiers in charge of it had been killed. Yet his mind was occupied with nothing save plans for carrying through the conquest to which he had set his hand, and retrieving the disaster that had dimmed his glory.

When they learned this, the soldiers broke out into open remonstrance at such madness. Once more Cortés showed his leadership. After painting in burning words what they had done and what remained to do, he bade any who were too faint-hearted to share in this achievement to return "in God's name." He would rather remain with a few brave men than have the company of cowards. The result was as he had calculated: his veterans protested that they stay with him till death; and the newer recruits were carried along by the determination of their comrades.

In addition Cortés had to use much diplomacy to prevent trouble with the Tlascalans. He managed, however, to hold the friendly chiefs firm to their alliance; so that when the new Mexican Emperor, Cuitlahuac, attempted to draw these ancient foes into a league against the Spaniards, his overtures were rejected.

The next six months were a busy time. Cortés sent for reinforcements and ammunition to Santo Domingo; got more from a vessel which happened to come to Vera Cruz; drilled the Tlascalan battalions and helped them by subduing the surrounding tribes; managed to get sulphur from the volcano of Popocatepetl to make powder; and, having formed the audacious plan of building thirteen brigantines and carrying them piecemeal to the Mexican lakes—actually conveyed all the sails, anchors, and rigging saved from the destroyed fleet, by porters, over the formidable mountains from Vera Cruz to Tlascala so that they could be used in constructing this fleet.

Just before the end of the year, he started on his mission of vengeance, with a force of six hundred men, including forty cavalry, eighty musketeers and cross-

bowmen, and nine cannon. He had besides a great force of Tlascalans, estimated at a hundred thousand warriors, who had been drilled to much greater efficiency by his careful training.

"We had no choice," he wrote home, "but victory or death; and our minds once resolved, we moved forward with as light a step as if we had been going on an errand of certain pleasure."

The Mexican Emperor had died, and Montezuma's warlike young nephew, Guatemozin, reigned in his stead. Valiant he was, and "so terrible that his followers trembled in his presence." He had been straining every nerve to make ready for the life-and-death struggle which he saw approaching: those who could not fight were sent away from the city of Mexico, hundreds of thousands of warriors were brought in from the subject provinces around, the defenses were strengthened, and he proclaimed a great reward for any one who should bring a Spaniard before him, dead or alive.

While awaiting the completion of the ships, Cortés conducted two expeditions which fought their way completely around the Valley of Mexico, meeting in several places with a resistance that showed the natives were ready to die rather than yield. At one town the Indians cut the dike holding in the waters of Lake Tezcuco, destroying their city in the attempt to drown the Spaniards—in which they came within a hair's breadth of succeeding. At another, in a hot fight, Cortés was surrounded. His horse fell. He received a violent blow on the head which felled him to the ground. As he was being dragged away, a Tlascalan sprang to the rescue; a couple of his servants followed; and between them they managed to get the com-

mander free and in the saddle—when he rallied his troops and charged again. Had it not been for the keen desire of the Indians to take him alive for sacrifice, his career would have ended there. The success of this circuit, however, drew away from the Mexican Emperor one wavering tribe after another. The city was surrounded.

At length, along came the thirteen brigantines, borne piecemeal on the backs of thousands of Indian carriers for sixty miles across the mountains—a stupendous feat.* Work had for some time been proceeding on a canal from the old royal gardens at Tezcuco to the lake, a mile and a half. This herculean task, a ditch twelve feet wide and twelve feet deep—in places through solid rock—with sides of wood or stone, with locks and dams, took the labor of eight thousand men for two months. But when it was ready, and the vessels set up and each armed with a cannon, the invaders had the means of commanding the lakes, the lack of which had largely helped in bringing about their former disaster.

Just at this tense moment, a profound sensation was caused by a conspiracy against the life of Cortés and his friends, headed by a soldier named Villafana, who had come from the army of Narvaez. The plot was complete, and was only discovered the day before the one set, by the confession of a conspirator. When arrested, Villafana attempted to swallow a paper. Cortés seized it and read a list of those concerned, many in places of trust. He promptly destroyed the

* "Hannibal, and Gonsalvo de Cordova, did the same thing," remarks Prescott, "but for short distances. And Balboa managed to get two vessels out of four across the sixty-six-mile width of the Isthmus of Darien."

list, hanged Villafana, and went ahead with his plans as if he had no knowledge of the other plotters. It was a daring and well-calculated handling of a menacing situation.

On April 28 the first navy ever launched in American waters spread its sails on the Lake of Tezcuco, flying the royal flag of Castile, amid salvoes from cannon and muskets. It soon met with a fleet of five hundred war-canoes and at once showed its importance by dashing through this mass of frail boats, crushing and sinking them with prows and cannon-balls, till but a tiny fraction escaped. Different divisions of the army advanced and occupied the causeways to the north and south of the city, cutting off the water-supply at Chapultepec as they went—and about the middle of May, the actual siege of Mexico began.

With the co-operation of the ships, one on each side of the causeway and thus directing a deadly cross-fire at the enemy, the army drove back the defenders along these highways, repairing one bridge after another. They pressed forward into the heart of the city, reaching their old quarters and chasing a number of the Mexicans into the great temple they had carried by assault once before. The cross was gone. The ghastly image of the Mexican war-god was again in its place. The invaders tore it from before its altar and hastened down again to the area, to find new masses of the enemy streaming in from every side. They were driven back by these fresh forces, and only escaped a real rout by the arrival of a small troop of horse.

Day after day, the troops of Cortés fought their way in and back again, till it became evident that only the destruction of all that part of the city would suffice, since the indefatigable foe undid each night all

that the Spaniards had accomplished. Accordingly, though with great regret, Cortés began a systematic destruction of all the magnificent structures along the route, at the same time using his Indians to fill in one breach of the causeway after another with such great stones that they could not be disturbed by the enemy. Alvarado, too, hammered away on the north, advancing step by step into the city's vitals.

In spite of the far more terrible ravages of famine, the Mexicans rejected every suggestion of surrender and fought on with dogged courage.

The impatient soldiers urged Cortés to make a general assault and he consented. All went well at the start; but the advance-guard under Alderete pressed forward too impetuously, failing to obey orders and fill up the canals before they advanced. They reached the great market-place in the heart of the town.

The sacred horn of Guatemozin suddenly sounded from a near-by temple. The flying Aztecs turned, reinforced by thousands from every direction. The Spaniards were swept along by the irresistible tide toward the open breach, on the other side of which stood Cortés and his party striving to repair the fatal error of not filling up this chasm. The latter saved as many of the fugitives as they could, stretching out their arms to the poor wretches floundering in the water.

Cortés was a conspicuous mark for the Mexican missiles. Failing to strike him down, six picked warriors rushed forward crying, "Malintzin! Malintzin!" (their name for the Spanish leader), and made a concerted effort to drag him down to their canoe.

Cortés got a bad wound in the leg, and it seemed as if he would surely be taken. But Olea, one of his men, threw himself upon the assailants, cut off the arm of

one with a single blow and plunged his sword through another. As he fell himself, mortally wounded, another Spaniard and a Tlascalan chief sprang to the rescue, killing three more of the Aztecs over the prostrate body of Cortés.

Others followed, and the commander was soon remounted and urged away from the scene. They retreated, while the exultant Mexicans hurled down on them bloody heads from the house-tops, shouting, "Tonatiuh" ("Child of the Sun," their name for Alvarado), "Sandoval," and so on. Alvarado and Sandoval (with whose reported death the enemy thus sought to strike despair into the hearts of the discouraged Spaniards) were also compelled to retire on the north by the failure of this main attack, in which sixty-two Spaniards and many allies had fallen alive into the hands of the Aztecs—and the army had the horrible experience that night of hearing the huge drum of serpent-skins *boom* forth its ghastly message to the surrounding air for miles and miles, and of seeing these luckless comrades sacrificed to the Aztec gods on the summit of one of the temples.

Many of the Indian allies deserted the besiegers after this reverse, but Cortés held steadily to his former plan; and with this relentless though slow advance from without, and the most frightful sufferings from famine and pestilence within, the lot of the Mexicans was terrible indeed. Even after weeks of this, however—with thousands of dead unburied, with the living driven by unbearable hunger to cannibalism, with a smoking ruin in place of the temples and palaces of the larger part of the city—in spite of all, Guatemozin remained calm and courageous, refusing to consider surrender.

There followed a last butchery (the defenders being almost too weak to resist), in which Cortés himself states that forty thousand were killed. Even then the remainder would not submit. On the following day, however, Guatemozin was captured by one of the brigantines as he fled in a canoe. Without a leader, the Mexicans submitted to the inevitable.

Guatemozin was brought before the Conqueror.

"I have done all I could to defend my people," said he. "I am now reduced to this state. You will deal with me, Malintzin, as you will."

"Fear not," replied the Spanish general. "You shall be treated with all honor. You have defended your capital like a brave warrior. A Spaniard knows how to respect valor, even in an enemy."

The remnant of the inhabitants were allowed to depart, the streets were cleansed and purified, and in solemn procession the battle-scarred veterans defiled through the city which had cost them so dear. The conquest of Mexico was accomplished.

VI

The subsequent career of Cortés was on the whole a sad one. Though confirmed in his command, and granted a vast estate in Mexico, where he lived in splendor, he never received the full recognition which was his due, the Spanish Crown fearing such a powerful leader in its new dominions. He made, and had made, at heavy expense, many explorations, especially on the western coast in the Gulf of California, but of course failed to find the strait which was the dream of that time, in order to get a quicker route to the East Indies. He finally died in Spain after a fruitless three

years' effort to get his suit for these expeditions even brought to trial.

Nothing more was necessary, however, after his Mexican campaign to win for him a foremost place among the boldest of the world's adventurers. We have learned nowadays to value other kinds of courage more highly, since the world has more need of men who will sacrifice themselves than those who will sacrifice others; and in our peaceful times it is difficult not to shudder at the terrible cruelty which Cortés had to practise to carry out his aim. It is true, too, that while full of hot zeal for converting the heathen, it was the thirst for treasure and for personal glory which mainly led the Spaniard on.

Yet his deeds on this plane of courage were so pre-eminent, his resolution in the face of any odds was so superhuman, that so long as men admire physical bravery, the name of Hernando Cortés must be blazoned bright in the annals of the race.

CHAPTER XIV

THE TERRIBLY PERSISTENT SWINEHERD

WHEN Columbus added the New World to the Spanish possessions, there was living in a little town of southern Spain a certain Francisco Pizarro, who had just reached manhood, having been born about 1471. His father made claim to ancient lineage, but there was a stain upon Francisco's birth. He took care of a herd of swine and grew up without learning to read or write. Probably there was no one of less importance, even in his quiet, forgotten village of Truxillo.

Almost the only career open to such a one in those days was that of a soldier of fortune. Young Pizarro drifted across the ocean to Hispaniola, along with so many thousands of other adventurers who had all to gain and nothing to lose. The first definite glimpse of him there is when he accompanied Ojeda in his disastrous expedition to the mainland. The Spaniards were always looking for the marvels of romance in this unknown land: Amazons, giants, fountains of youth—and especially that fabled El Dorado, where the sands were strewn with precious stones, the streets were paved with gold, and nuggets could be fished up with nets from the streams. They founded colonies, made the Indians till the soil for them, were filled with fiery zeal for converting these infidels (or slaying them); but it was this golden vision in particular which ever lured them on through the utmost hardships and dangers.

As related elsewhere, Ojeda, that incredibly brave and absurd little warrior, landed on the shore of South America. He found, instead of gold, showers of poisoned arrows, which killed all his comrades. Rescued by a force from the ships he sailed along the coast with his two tiny brigantines and set up a settlement called San Sebastian on the Isthmus of Darien. Disaster followed. The Indians fought them savagely and continually, until the party found itself reduced to one-third of those who had started, and these facing starvation. Out of the skies came temporary help in the shape of a ship-load of provisions seized by one Talavera and a band of seventy pirates. But soon hunger again gripped them. Ojeda decided to return to Hispaniola for help. Leaving Pizarro in command, with orders to wait fifty days and then follow if he had not come back, he sailed off with Talavera and his ruffians. He was wrecked on the coast of Cuba, then not settled, got to Jamaica after a desperate struggle, and found himself ill, without money, without credit, unable to get any men or supplies—finally dying in the Franciscan monastery.

Meanwhile Pizarro, of course knowing nothing of what was happening, followed orders. Amid constant fighting, sickness, hunger, despair, he stuck to his post. The seven weeks dragged themselves away. No word arrived from Ojeda. He was free at last to try to save his party and himself. But to his dismay he found the two little vessels, in bad condition as they were, would not carry even what was left of the expedition.

So with grim resolution, he sat down and waited, seeing all too clearly that he need do nothing else to reduce the numbers of the wretched party. One can imagine him counting up the list after each fresh dis-

aster, calmly looking forward to the inevitable. And when the poisoned arrows and starvation and disease had cut down the number to the sixty or seventy whom the brigantines would hold, Pizarro put them aboard and sailed away. One ship was lost, with all on board; Pizarro reached Hispaniola with the other and thirty survivors—and narrowly escaped hanging, under the suspicion that he had murdered and deserted Ojeda.

He went back to San Sebastian with another expedition, there being on board, concealed in a provisional barrel, a poverty-stricken stowaway named Vasco Nuñez, better known as Balboa. With him Pizarro helped to found a settlement on the shore of Panama, Maria de la Antigua del Darien, where they got their first taste of gold to the extent of about twenty-five thousand dollars captured from the cacique of that country, and started a town, Darien, which is therefore nearly a hundred years older than Jamestown. A Governor came from Spain to take charge of this new colony. His name was Pedrarias; he was seventy-two years old, and he well earned his doleful title (once borne by Attila, King of the Huns) "the Scourge of God," being as described "a two-legged tiger." Balboa submitted to his authority, and shortly after set out to cross the isthmus and discover if the Indian tales were true of a great sea on the other side. It was Pizarro who led forward the little band of sixty-seven men to the point of outlook beside Balboa, as that leader stood alone,

"Silent, upon a peak in Darien,"

the first white man to view the silver waters of the mighty Pacific Ocean.

The gallant and lovable Balboa presently quarrelled with Pedrarias; it was patched up, and Balboa—after the memorable achievement of building brigantines on the eastern coast, and carrying them piecemeal thirty miles over the mountains till he reached navigable water on the other side—got ready to sail south to investigate the native tales of a marvellous land down there where gold was so abundant that men thought nothing of it; but while waiting only for a little pitch and iron, the fierce Governor, whose anger had been aroused, recalled him and put him to death.

At the age of fifty, therefore, Pizarro found himself in Panama, a failure, with little except his sword, a firm belief in the Indian stories of an El Dorado to the south, and a reputation for being “of a terrible persistence” in whatever he undertook.

The return, in 1522, of Andagoya's expedition to the southward, with many fresh rumors of the golden land, and the news of Cortés's actual discoveries and superb achievement, added fuel to the smouldering fire within him. Taking into partnership another old soldier, Almagro, as poor as himself, they attempted to raise money for the expedition. A priest named Luque (who afterward proved to be simply an agent for the licentiate Gasper de Espinosa) supplied most of the funds in expectation of a third of the prospective finds; and Pedrarias readily consented to their effort upon the agreement that he, too, was to have a good share. One of poor Balboa's ships was lying dismantled in the harbor of Panama; buying this, they hastily put aboard such provisions and supplies as they could get, and about the end of 1524, Pizarro set sail with a hundred men. Almagro was to follow in another vessel as soon as it could be made ready.

Passing the Isle of Pearls, a few leagues from Panama, they held south, against head-winds and incessant tempests of rain. Entering the Biru River, beyond the farthest point reached by Andagoya, they landed, but found nothing save dismal swamp and desolate rock; and a little farther down the coast, they ran into such a violent storm that the ship almost foundered. Provisions and water began to get low. Reduced to two ears of corn a day for each man, they were glad to gain shore.

But this "Port of Famine" still offered naught but swamp and an impenetrable network of silent, gloomy undergrowth and forest. The men became mutinous, but Pizarro encouraged them and sent back half the company under Montenegro in the ship to bring supplies from the Isle of Pearls. His own party dropped off one by one from starvation and from eating poisonous roots; they sought for some trace of natives, picking up shell-fish, eagerly eating the bitter buds of palms, a few berries, and herbs.

As week after week passed, it was only their leader's example that kept them even struggling to live. When twenty were dead, and the others almost at the end of their strength, they came upon a small Indian village, and the maize and cocoanuts which they greedily seized gave them a little heart. And the tale they heard of a mighty kingdom to the south, which had just been conquered by the "Child of the Sun," did almost more. Although Montenegro hardly knew his emaciated comrades when he finally returned at the end of six weeks, Pizarro had little difficulty in persuading his men to press on.

Creeping along the unknown shore, beset by furious storms at sea and cannibal tribes when they landed,

they had a sharp battle with the Indians at a place they called Punta Quemada. Pizarro received seven wounds, and almost lost his life through a fall as the enemy beset him. With prodigious effort he held off his assailants till help arrived; but two Spaniards were killed and many disabled. So he decided to go back for reinforcements, trusting that the various confirming stories of the land of gold would serve in place of anything more substantial.

He sent the ship on to the settlement, but he himself was set ashore at Chicamá, a little west of Panama, as he feared Pedrarias. Here he was joined by the returning Almagro, who had followed his route, had gone farther, and had lost an eye in a fight with the Indians.

Almagro hastened back to Panama, but found Pedrarias irritable and incredulous. Not only would he have nothing to do with a fresh expedition, but he refused to allow it; and it was only through the influence of Father Luque, upon whom the explorers' story had made quite a different impression, that permission was finally gained, the Governor appointing Almagro equal in command with Pizarro. Pedrarias sold out his share for a thousand pesos; a fresh contract was drawn between the three parties, coolly dividing between them the treasures of this unknown empire; two larger vessels were purchased; and though there was little enthusiasm in Panama for what was considered a crazy venture, Pizarro managed to get together a force of a hundred and sixty men and a few horses. He also secured Bartholomew Ruiz, the best pilot in the country.

They stood out to sea this time, heading straight for the point at which Almagro had turned back; and reaching this after a prosperous voyage, they captured

a village where they took a considerable prize of golden ornaments. It became clear, from the increasing number of natives, that their force was too small. Almagro went back, with the treasure as a bait for fresh recruits, Ruiz was sent ahead to explore, and Pizarro encamped where he was. The last had the worst of it: his exploration inland found little but a tropical jungle, full of parrots and monkeys; mosquitoes made life a burden; great boas, alligators, and hostile Indians relieved the sufferings of many by death, fourteen men being cut off at once; and their old enemy famine pressed his gripping hand upon them.

Their one faint hope became that some miracle might get them safe back to Panama—when, in their black despair, along came Almagro with eighty more men and fresh stores, and Ruiz with a tale that set them aflame again: he had gone past the equator, had found more prosperous settlements all the way, had, to his astonishment, met at sea a great *balsa* or raft propelled by a square sail, loaded with fine embroidered woollen cloth and with gold and silver ornaments of skilful workmanship—and had brought along from this *balsa* two Indians from Tumbez, a Peruvian port farther south. These natives declared that their ruler had vast flocks of the llamas from which this wool was obtained, and that gold and silver were as common as wood in his palaces.

In hot haste, like the bloodhound who scents a fresh trail, they set forth southward again. At Tacamez they found a better-cultivated country, a city of two thousand houses, the natives wearing rich ornaments; and near by was the River of Emeralds, from whose banks the Peruvian Incas obtained their gems. But the natives confronted them boldly, to the number

of ten thousand warriors; and the fight which followed, against Pizarro's orders, was going badly for the Spaniards, when one of them fell off his horse. The Indians had never seen a horse; they thought cavalymen were a new species of being; and when they saw one of these strange creatures suddenly divide itself in two, they drew back in alarm!

The adventurers returned to their boats. The more timid were for returning, as they were daunted by the prospect; but it was finally decided that Pizarro again was to be left, on the little island of Gallo, while Almagro went back for reinforcements. The soldiers grumbled openly at this; and though the leaders seized the letters of complaint which were sent home, one man concealed in a ball of cotton, to be presented to the Governor's lady, a note telling of their hard lot, and declaring they were being sacrificed to Pizarro's insane ambition. It wound up with this verse:

“Look out, Señor Governor,
For the drover while he's near;
Since he goes home to get the sheep
For the butcher, who stays here.”

There was a new Governor in Panama, and he was very angry when this missive came to light. Refusing all Almagro's petitions, he sent two ships to bring home the whole party.

Pizarro had sent away the second vessel also, to rid himself of the faintest hearted and to give no choice to the others; and he needed all his steadfastness in the weeks that followed. His party was even harder pressed by hunger than they had been before; and the daily thunder-storms of the rainy season added greatly to their misery.

When the Governor's ships arrived, the soldiers were in raptures at the thought of escaping from this horrible island; but Pizarro, who had received letters from his partners begging him to hold on in hope of their ultimate success, showed once more that "terrible persistence" which made him a conqueror.

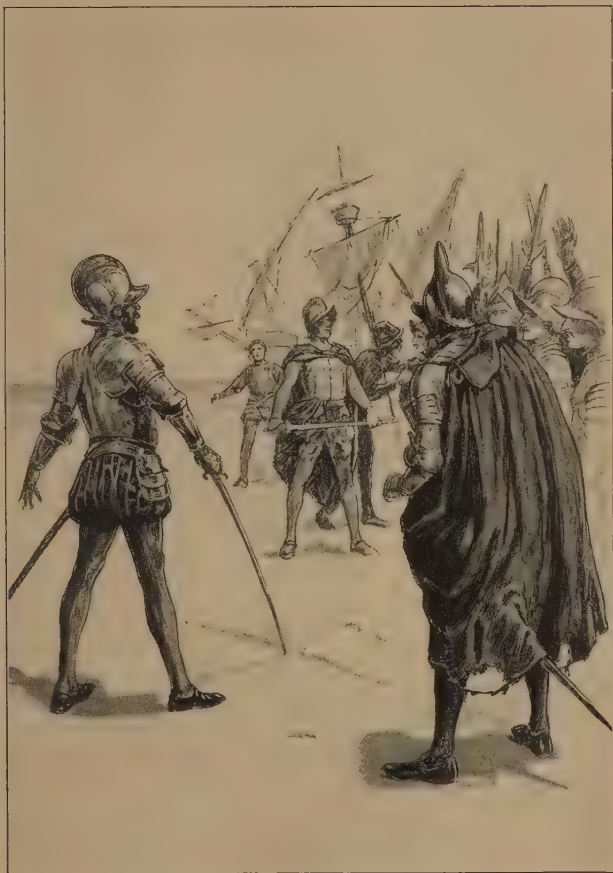
He faced his men and the relief party, who all looked at him in wonder. Drawing his sword, he scraped a line with the point in the sand, from east to west.

"Comrades!" said he, pointing his blade southward. "On that side are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, desertion, and death; on this side, ease and pleasure. There lies Peru, with its riches; here, Panama and its poverty. Choose, each man, what best becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go to the south."

He stepped across the line. Ruiz followed. A cavalier named Pedro de Candia leaped across after him. One by one, eleven brave hearts took their place beside their leader. Their names should not be forgotten. They were: Cristoval de Peralta, Domingo de Soria Luce, Nicolas de Ribera, Francisco de Cuellar, Alonso de Molina, Pedro Alçon, Garcia de Jerez, Anton de Carrion, Alonso Briceño, Martin de Paz, Juan de la Torre.

At this impressive moment Pizarro touched one of the high points of his life. Just think of it: these thirteen half-naked, half-starved, weary adventurers on a lonely island, without equipment, without a boat, electing to remain, in the vague hope that their friends would still succeed in bringing the help which had been denied by the authorities. It took Men, that.

The astonished commander of the relief expedition was with difficulty persuaded to leave them a few pro-



"On that side are toil, hunger . . . on this side, ease and pleasure"

visions. Then he sailed away, and the brave handful were left to the misery of their own choosing.

Pizarro decided to move to another island, Gorgona, where there was wood and a few pheasants and rabbits. Making a raft, they managed to drift across the seventy-five miles and reach this new abode, where they built huts and settled down to their dreary wait.

Seven weary months they waited, their anxious eyes each day beholding naught but the waste of waters about them and the chill, snow-capped peaks of the Andes towering above the clouds on the distant mainland.

Then at last, a sail! And lo! instead of reinforcements, it was a tiny vessel which the Governor had reluctantly consented to let Almagro send to rescue the rash party. It brought a stern order to Pizarro to report at Panama in six months whatever happened.

This indomitable being had grown only too well accustomed through the long years to take what he could get and make the best of it. Leaving two ill soldiers with some friendly Indians, he disobeyed these orders and set his face resolutely toward that golden vision which ever drew him southward.

At the end of three weeks, they found themselves approaching Tumbez, the native city of the Indians whom Ruiz had taken off the *balsa* so many long months before. Inland, the mighty mountain range, which had borne them company all the way, rolled up to the vast dome of Chimborazo, while Cotopaxi shot upward its terrible fire and smoke from its silver-white dome over twenty thousand feet above their little craft.

It was the largest city they had yet seen, many of the buildings of stone and plaster; the harbor was full of canoes and *balsas*, and on the shores hundreds of

curious natives were watching. They were soon on friendly terms with the inhabitants, who regaled them with all manner of fruits and vegetables, fish and game, together with a number of llamas, of which the Spaniards had hitherto seen only drawings. The natives were amazed and awed at the firearms and horses. They gazed with astonishment at these fair-haired "Children of the Sun" and at a negro attendant who had come from Panama: trying to rub from the black man's face with their hands what they supposed to be dye—whereat the good-natured African showed all his teeth in a grin. They had never seen chickens, and a rooster fascinated them: when he crowed loudly they started back, then turned to the strangers and asked what this new god was saying!

The Spaniards on their side were little less impressed. They saw the fort, surrounded by a triple wall; the temple, its inner walls bright with plates of gold and silver; the gardens of the convent which housed the destined brides of the Inca, where besides real flowers there shone beds of golden imitations which they beheld skilful artisans fashioning elsewhere; they talked with an Inca noble, an *orejón* (wearing the distinguishing mark of his rank, the massive gold earrings, which in some cases distended the ears so that they touched the shoulders!), and learned that all these wonders were but a feeble imitation of the incredible splendors of Peru itself.

They might well be amazed, for after all their persistence they had at last touched the outskirts of one of the most extraordinary civilizations the world has ever known. For four hundred years one Inca after another, in unbroken line, had ruled over the land; the first was believed to be the child of the Sun, and

each when crowned was worshipped as only second to that sacred luminary with his sister Moon and attendant Stars. The victorious armies of these proud monarchs had extended their dominions till they covered a strip of twenty-five hundred miles along the mountainous western coast of South America, taking in about what is now Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chili. They proudly called their domain "the Four Quarters of the Earth." The Inca was absolutely supreme over his million of subjects; he himself was law and religion; he was the Child of the Sun, his banner was the Rainbow; he boasted that the very birds would not dare to fly without his orders; he wore a scarlet fringe on his turban, adorned with two plumes of a rare bird and it was death for a subject to use these feathers; only one of the thousands of royal descendants (for the monarchs frequently had six or seven hundred wives) could hold the most important positions at the court, in the army, in the priesthood, in the outlying provinces—and even these proud princes could not enter the royal presence without special coarse robes over their fine clothes and jewels, and without bearing loads to proclaim their inferiority; they spoke a special court language, had a costume of their own, were of a perpetual higher order, to which even the chiefs of the conquered lands could never attain. When an Inca died, his mummy took its place, in all the dead ruler's most gorgeous attire, in the solemn line that ranged itself on either side of the huge golden Sun in the temple at Cuzco; his treasures, his palaces, his belongings were religiously kept, in expectation of his bodily return some day; and on certain festivals these departed monarchs were brought out at the head of a great procession in the public square, amid "such a

display of gold and silver plate and jewels as no other city in the world ever witnessed."

Under their far-seeing policy, the narrow strip of land between the mountains and the sea was cultivated as was no other soil in primitive America, water being brought down in canals and aqueducts for plentiful irrigation, the only approach to a plough among any American tribes being used, the very sides of the rocky hills being terraced, filled in with soil and made to produce the products of every zone. They built thousands of miles of good roads, over the pathless mountains, across rock and snow and chasms and rivers and desert, marked off with mile-posts kept in splendid repair, with storehouses of provisions and clothing, and quarters for the ruler, his messengers, his army, at stated intervals. An elaborate system of runners, with stations five miles apart, brought him delicacies from mountain or sea, or news, at a speed of probably two hundred miles a day. Knowing nothing of writing, and not having the Aztec picture-writing art, these communications were by means of the *quipus*, two-foot cords of colored threads, with a fringe, by the colors of which and by a system of knots the Peruvian sent messages, kept a wonderfully complete census, and preserved the national epics.

The monarchs had their swarming thousands of workmen build palaces, forts, temples, quarrying without steel, and transporting for leagues without beasts of burden, huge blocks of stone some of which, in the Temple of the Sun, were thirty-eight feet long, eighteen broad, and six thick! This temple was well called *Coricancha*, the Place of Gold: the whole of the main interior was covered with seven hundred tiles of gold and silver a foot wide; the image of the deity was a

human face engraved on a great golden plate blazing with jewels, from which dashed golden rays—and the morning sun always streamed through the open doorway upon this representation of himself; in the gardens beside the myriads of flowers gleamed golden plants and animals wrought by skilled artificers, among them being life-sized stalks of corn with leaves of silver and grains of gold. No ruler of Babylon or Persia could compare with this semidivine monarch in splendor.

Meanwhile the people were slaves. They were cared for paternally; no man could starve, for he was supplied with food if he needed it. But work he must: tilling the soil, and turning over the fruits of his labor, one part to the Sun (for the temples and priests); one part to the Inca; the rest for himself. He could never change his condition, but toiled on in the footsteps of his fathers, at the land, in the workshop, in the army, on the roads, or public buildings, caring for the vast flocks of llamas, domestic and wild, which were the Inca's property. It was death even to question the ruler's authority. At the age of twenty-four he had to marry—and must choose from the girls of eighteen years in his own community. When he married he was given land to care for; when children came he got more land; in misfortune he received food from the King's granaries or clothing from his storehouses. He had to keep his national costume, but was frequently transferred in bodies of ten thousand at a time to colonize some alien territory. He kept his own language, but his children learned the court dialect. No other nation of which we know ever imagined such a prodigious paternal despotism as that which the Peruvian Incas wielded unquestioned over millions of human

beings, differing in language, habits, dress, religion, for a term of at least four hundred years.

Small wonder that the enraptured Spaniards thought their wildest dreams were far short of the reality.

Pizarro kept his men firmly in hand: they were not allowed even to take presents of anything valuable, to prove their disinterestedness. They were met with greatest friendliness everywhere; and after sailing on down the coast as far as Santa, over six hundred miles below the equator, the expedition turned back to Panama, sure that they would find every man flocking to their banner and praying to share in the conquest they planned.

But when they arrived, bursting with their great news, they were discredited and laughed at. The Governor declared coldly that he did not propose to throw away any more men's lives because of their show of "cheap gold and silver toys and a few Indian sheep!"

It was a bitter disappointment. Pizarro and his partners had exhausted all they had. No one had enough faith to lend a hand. But the ex-swineherd's persistence was now founded on too secure a rock of knowledge to think of giving up. Convinced that the only chance lay with the Emperor at home, he sailed for Spain in the spring of 1528, taking with him a few scanty evidences in the shape of golden ornaments, woollen fabrics, and some of the curious llamas.

Here it was a different story. His tale was believed. He was authorized to conquer the land, being made Governor and Captain-General with a great salary and many dignities—all to come from the riches of the country itself. He received the Order of St. Jago, the proudest dignity of Castile. Almagro was to rule the

region to the south of him, Luque was to be Bishop of Tumbez, Ruiz, Lord Mayor.

In spite of all this recognition, Pizarro had much difficulty in raising the two hundred and fifty men which his commission called for; he was helped by his distant kinsman Cortés, then in Spain, whose name went far in such matters because of his colossal success in Mexico; but at the end of six months the expedition was not complete. Pizarro, hearing he was to be stopped by the council, set sail hurriedly, his brother Hernando following with two other vessels, in which were two more brothers, Gonzalo and Juan.

Almagro was greatly discontented with the inferior award bestowed upon him, compared with that given his partner, and a bitter quarrel followed, which, though patched up, left the seeds of future trouble. Still, they realized that this was no time for disagreement. The preparations were pushed forward.

In January, 1531, Pizarro set out from Panama with barely two hundred men and twenty-seven horses, in three vessels, on his third and final effort. He was sixty years old. For nearly ten years he had pursued this dream in the face of poverty, famine, disbelief, dangers—at times almost alone in his belief and courage. Probably his force was far from seeming so absurdly inadequate to him as it does to us for the subjugation of a powerful empire.

This time, as if in recompense for the many buffetings of fortune in the past, his star was in the ascendant. Meeting with head-winds, he decided to land about three hundred miles north of Tumbez and march along the shore, while the ships made their way as they could. Capturing a town, they were rejoiced by the unexpected sight of quantities of gold and fine stuffs, besides

a great store of precious stones (this being near the River of Emeralds). One emerald as large as a pigeon's egg fell to Pizarro.

He promptly sent back the ships to Panama for recruits, with a quantity of this gold as an earnest of what might be expected, and pressed on. It was hard travelling, through the scorching heat of desert sands, through forest, and over rocks. A mysterious plague of ulcers attacked their bodies. The disheartened soldiers cursed the hour when they had been drawn into this mad enterprise. But Pizarro still drove them forward.

Presently a vessel with supplies and some Crown officials caught up with them; and after they had defeated the natives of Puña with much slaughter, their own two ships appeared, bearing a welcome addition of a hundred soldiers, led by the afterward famous discoverer of the Mississippi River, Hernando de Soto. Moreover, the commander learned that the three years which had intervened since his first visit to Tumbez had fought for him more effectively than could a reinforcement of a thousand cavaliers.

The Inca who had conquered the land of Quito, north of Tumbez, Huayna Capac, had died in 1525. Against the unbroken tradition of his forefathers, and against all principles of wisdom, he had divided his realm between his lawful son, Huascar, and his child by a princess of Quito, Atahualpa. The latter was a bold, ambitious prince, while his half-brother was a gentle, lovable nature, content with his share, and unable to resist Atahualpa when the northern ruler openly attacked him. Only a few months before Pizarro's arrival, Atahualpa had marched on the ancient capital of Cuzco, defeated his brother in a bloody battle, im-

prisoned him, and reigned in the greatest state over the whole empire. He was at this moment encamped at Caxamalca (the modern town of Cajamarca) taking the warm baths for which that health resort was noted. At this auspicious time, with the country still rent by the furies of civil war, did the invaders arrive.

The Spaniards found Tumbez devastated and the natives hostile. Pizarro decided to make a settlement as a headquarters, and after a month's exploration he picked out a spot a hundred miles south. Soon a church, fortress, storehouse, hall of justice, and some dwellings marked the new town of San Miguel. Still hoping for reinforcements, Pizarro waited some weeks longer, receiving many further accounts of the wealth and power of the new Inca only a two-weeks' journey away. At length he decided action was less dangerous than further delay. On September 24, he set out to beard the victorious Inca, in the midst of his army flushed with success.

There was more than one in that band of less than two hundred who felt tremors at the prospect. The leader perceived this spirit. He knew there was men's work ahead. On the fifth day, he halted in a beautiful valley, and inspected the troops and their equipment. Then he addressed them:

"A crisis has arrived in our affairs," said he. "It will take all our courage to meet what is ahead. No man should think of going forward if he has any fears in his heart. If there is any such, it is not too late still to turn back. San Miguel is but poorly garrisoned: I shall be glad to see it strengthened. Any one of you who chooses may return, and he shall have the same proportion of land and vassals as the rest. I want none but the bravest to go forward.

"As for me," his eyes flashed, "be it one or all who decides to take the chance with me, I shall follow this adventure to the end."

There was a silence. Four foot-soldiers and five horsemen shamefacedly fell out of the ranks and turned back toward the coast. But their departure was drowned in the shouts of their comrades, who, fired with enthusiasm by the bearing of their chief, vowed they would follow him into the jaws of death.

It was another of Pizarro's high points, this remarkable scene—a display of resolution in itself sufficient to carry an ordinary man's name down to posterity. It was, alas! almost the last time he reached such levels, though he was shortly to obtain that heart's desire for which he had striven so long and mightily.

They went forward. De Soto was sent ahead to reconnoitre. He returned, after an alarming delay, accompanied by an envoy from the Inca. This noble brought presents—two stone fountains, clothes of fine wool embroidered with gold, a peculiar perfume made of dried goose-flesh; besides an invitation from Atahualpa to visit him.

Again they advanced, with much anxiety, on account of conflicting rumors as to the Inca's whereabouts and his intentions. At the end of a week, they faced the mountains behind which lay Caxamalca. Ahead were dangerous passes, where they might be cut off at any moment, leading to the Emperor with his great army. To the right ran the broad highway to Cuzco, the capital. How easy for a smaller man to persuade himself that the wise plan was to capture this important city first. His followers urged it. But Pizarro pointed out that they no longer had any choice but to go to Caxamalca or be branded as cowards.

And once more the inspirited soldiers submitted their wills to his.

The path led along ledges, by the edge of precipices, beneath overhanging rocks, across frightful clefts. They passed from the oak forests into gloomy pines, then through stunted bushes and alpine plants, then over the bare and desolate upper regions where naught grew but stunted yellow grass, and where an occasional mountain-llama and the great condor soaring overhead were the only living creatures.

After six days (during which two embassies arrived that increased Pizarro's apprehensions) they came to the charming valley of Caxamalca, a perfect garden-spot, where the travellers' astonished eyes beheld such a host of tents marking the Inca's encampment as caused "something like fear and confusion in the stoutest bosom." So writes one of the party, adding: "But it was too late to turn back or betray the least sign of weakness, since the natives in our company would in such a case have been the first to rise upon us. So with as bold a countenance as we could, after coolly surveying the ground, we prepared for our entrance."

The first interview was disappointing. Hernando Pizarro, De Soto, and a few others were led into the presence of the Inca, who sat in great state amid his nobles, the imperial crimson *borla* on his brow. Without dismounting, they told him their leader came from the great Emperor across the seas, to offer their services and to tell him of the True Faith; and they invited him to visit their general at his quarters.

Not a muscle of Atahualpa's face changed. It was as if he had not heard them. The speech was translated. Still the Inca sat like an image, too far above them to heed.

There was an awkward pause. Then Hernando begged the monarch to speak. And at last he deigned to reply that he would come; meanwhile the Spaniards were to stay where they were, in the buildings opening on the public square. De Soto, perhaps feeling that they cut a sorry figure, noticed that those near him shrank from his mettlesome charger. Striking the spurs to his horse, he dashed away over the plain, performing all sorts of feats of horsemanship; then, galloping fiercely back straight at the Emperor, he threw the animal back on its haunches so close to the Inca that flecks of foam flew off on the royal garments.

Atahualpa sat as motionless as ever, but some of his attendants drew back—and the Spaniards were told that these were put to death that evening.

The adventurers passed an anxious night. Perils seemed to beset them on every side. There were many who wished themselves back in San Miguel. But Pizarro remembered the master-stroke of Cortés in Mexico. He made his preparations with minute care and awaited the event.

The next day was Saturday, the 16th of November. After an interminable morning, the royal procession was seen to start about noon. Then it halted half a mile away. Word came that the Inca would not come till the following day. Pizarro was confounded. He feared his men's nerves would not stand a longer strain. He returned an answer, begging Atahualpa to come as planned, as he had everything ready for his entertainment. It was true, but little did the luckless Emperor imagine in what sense it was true. He came, with only a few unarmed attendants, on a golden throne upon a litter, which shone with wonderful feathers and pre-

cious ornaments; his attire was magnificent; round his neck was a priceless collar of emeralds.

Pizarro's chaplain met him, Bible in hand, commenced to expound the doctrines of the Christian faith, and urged him to submit himself to this and to the Spanish Emperor.

As he began to understand, Atahualpa's wrath rose. "I will be no man's vassal!" he cried. "Nor will I change my faith. My God," he pointed to the sun sinking behind the mountains, "still lives in the heavens and looks down on his children."

He demanded of the friar his authority, and the latter handed him the Bible. Atahualpa took it; then, realizing to the full the indignity offered him, he cast it down, exclaiming that the Spaniards should give full satisfaction for the wrongs they had committed in his land.

The chaplain hastened to the general. The moment had come. Waving a white scarf, Pizarro leaped forward. A cannon was fired. Shouting their battle-cry, "St. Jago and at them!" the Spaniards poured out from the halls where they had been stationed into the square, and attacked the unarmed Indians. These loyally tried to protect the Emperor with their own bodies, striving to force back the horses by the bridles; but in spite of Pizarro's stern cry, "Let no one who values his life strike at the Inca," one of the excited cavaliers would have ended the tumult by cutting him down, had not Pizarro stretched out his arm and caught the blow. He was the only Spaniard wounded—and that by his own soldier.

When the ghastly butchery, which ran to some thousands, was over, the Inca was a prisoner. It was a disgraceful act, and worse was to follow. They

pillaged the Inca's palace and the storehouses and recklessly slaughtered the great herds of llamas which had been so carefully protected.

Seeing their lust for gold, the royal captive one day told Pizarro that he would fill the room they stood in with gold as high as a man could reach in return for his freedom. The Spaniard eagerly assented. For months the royal treasure poured in, from all parts of the land, on the backs of porters and llamas, a throne of solid metal, vases, dishes, tiles, ornaments from the temples, bars, nuggets—and in addition silver and other treasures.

The mark was so nearly reached that Pizarro executed a formal agreement declaring the Inca's contract fulfilled. It took a month for the goldsmiths to melt most of the huge heap into ingots so that it could be divided. The value of the whole was nearly eighteen millions of dollars, by far the largest ransom ever recorded. The Spanish Emperor received a fifth, Pizarro was a millionaire, the common soldiers had fortunes; having no iron they shod their horses with gold and silver; a man would give twenty-five thousand dollars for a horse, four hundred for a pair of shoes, a hundred for a quire of paper.

And then, when the Inca became a problem in their advance, Pizarro, on an unproved charge of a conspiracy, put him to death. It was a base act, which stained his whole record.

Pizarro captured Cuzco, the capital, getting six or seven more millions of treasure, and grasped the whole country. He was acclaimed in Spain and made a Marquess, but, save for one final scene, his story from the point of view we are considering ends before his treachery to Atahualpa. He quarrelled with Almagro

and finally let him be put to death; there was one great uprising of the sheeplike Peruvians, who besieged Cuzco under the brave young Inca, Manco; but this was finally put down. Pizarro founded the city of Lima; there followed years of squabbles and civil war and rebellion among the conquerors. Then, inglorious as is the setting, we get a last flash of the Pizarro who is worthy of chronicle.

The "Men of Chili" (as Almagro's followers were called, from his expedition into that country) had never forgotten their leader's death. Driven to desperation, they finally plotted to assassinate the Marquess who had at least permitted it. On Sunday, the 26th of June, 1541, a score of the conspirators rushed through the streets of Lima to the Governor's palace, where Pizarro had just dined with a distinguished party. They burst in. Most of the dinner-party fled through the windows into the garden.

Pizarro called to an officer in the outer room to fasten the door. He and his half-brother, Martinez de Alcantara, coolly began to buckle on their armor. But the officer attempted to parley with the intruders. They ran him through, sprang over his dead body, and entered. The attendants were soon despatched. Alcantara sprang to the defense. Presently, he too and the pages were down. Half-armed, Pizarro fought as of old, and so terrible was he, that the murderers drew back with two of their number lifeless.

"Why are we so long about it?" cried Rada, the leader. Seizing one of his companions, he hurled him bodily upon Pizarro, and before the veteran could withdraw his sword from the body, they were all upon him.

Thus, at the age of seventy, died the Marquess

Francisco Pizarro, who gave to Spain her most priceless treasures of gold and silver, and who in the years of his terrible persistence displayed a steadfastness rarely equalled in mortal man.

CHAPTER XV

HOW CECIL RHODES ENDED THE MATABELE REBELLION

PROBABLY every one who reads this knows something of Cecil Rhodes, the "empire builder" of South Africa. However the future may estimate him, it is certain that few men of modern times have shown such boldness of conception, or such resolute ability in carrying out his colossal dreams. His courage was proved on many occasions; but it was in 1896 that he took his life in his hands to save the fortunes of the "Chartered Company" which was so dear to his heart.

Here was the situation.

Eight years before, Mr. Rhodes had secured from Lobengula, King of the fierce Matabele, a concession giving him the exclusive right to search for gold and diamonds in that ruler's territory of Mashonaland—a great unknown country of one hundred and seventy-four thousand square miles or nearly three times as large as all our New England States together. He paid for it five hundred dollars a month, a steam gunboat (afterward changed to twenty-five hundred dollars in cash), one thousand Martini-Henry rifles, and one million rounds of ball-cartridges. In the light of subsequent events, the last two items were more expensive than they seemed at the time. A year later he secured a charter from the English Government for the British South Africa Company, giving this corporation complete control of this great region. Its boundaries were

marked on the east, south, and west; but at Rhodes's insistence no line was given on the north—for as this audacious dreamer confessed, he hoped to see that part of Africa “all red” (under the English flag) clear up to the source of the Nile.

The new colony of Rhodesia, as it was christened, was thrown open. It developed rapidly, though there were inevitable discontents among the settlers and miners; but the expenses of the company were enormous; for instance, seven hundred police were needed, costing over a million dollars a year, because of the constant trouble with the Matabele natives. This item was cut down by the administrative skill of Doctor Jameson (later famous in the Jameson raid). War with the Matabele followed; they were promptly defeated with a tenth the number of volunteers that the military experts said would need a year for the job; but the company had rolled up more millions of debt, and great outlays were still needed for development. Mr. Rhodes's own large fortune was tied up in tremendous telegraph, railway, and mining developments, and the carefully nurtured company, into which he had poured his ideas, strength, and money, was just trembling in the balance, when in 1896 the Matabele again broke loose, and spread terror through the colony by their bloody massacres.

The volunteer force could not put down this rebellion and the settlers threatened to leave the country; General Carrington and a body of soldiers came up and drove the fierce warriors back step by step to their fastnesses in the Matoppo Hills; the rainy season came on, and the commander announced that his force must go into winter quarters and finish the campaign next spring.

This was a crushing blow. The home government had charge of the operations, but the Chartered Company was paying the bills—to the tune of tens of thousands of dollars a day. Such a long-drawn-out campaign meant a probable total of fifteen or twenty millions—and in the existing state of affairs that meant bankruptcy for the Chartered Company and the downfall of its founder's ambitious visions.

In this critical emergency, Rhodes took a desperate chance: he decided to go into the enemy's stronghold himself and try to persuade the chiefs to make peace.

General Carrington, when consulted, pronounced the plan foolhardy and washed his hands of all responsibility. But he agreed to postpone his own movement into winter quarters until the event proved itself.

Refusing any escort, and taking with him only three white men (one a veteran hunter, Johann Colebrander) and two native guides, Rhodes started for the hostile camp. The party had no rifles, and while each of his companions was allowed to wear a revolver, the leader carried nothing but a riding-whip.

Pitching camp close to the Matabele outposts, a guide was sent forward. He found the chiefs holding an indaba (council); and when he told them the facts, the leaders frowned down the murmurs of the hotheads and declared they would be glad to see their "friend Johann" (Colebrander)—and Mr. Rhodes, too, though they did not suppose he would come.

The party went forward. The appointed spot was a level amphitheatre surrounded by granite walls two hundred feet high, and commanded by a hill (kopje). As they approached, they saw the redoubtable Matabele swarming on these heights, armed with rifles and the

broad-bladed assegais which were such terrible weapons in their hands. They knew only too well that they were going among natives as savage and cruel as any in the world, now inflamed both by their bloody successes and their subsequent defeats; and at that moment the promise of safe-conduct under which they had proceeded did not appear of very great value.

But there was no hesitation. They advanced boldly to the meeting-ground. And as they watched tensely, a white flag fluttered in the breeze on the hill. Presently a long procession of chiefs (indunas) filed solemnly down the slope, garbed in their ceremonial finery.

The procession wound along and swung itself in a semicircle about the little group. Squatting down on the ground, the fierce black faces gazed at the four adventurous whites, who looked back at these leaders of the thousands about, whose hands and spears had dripped English blood so many times in the preceding months.

The elaborate formal greetings followed. When they were at last completed, Colebrander interpreted Rhodes's invitation to the Matabele to tell him what they desired.

"Speak your troubles to your father who has come among you with peace in his heart," he concluded.

The spokesman recited their grievances, real and fancied; and for a long time Rhodes met them point by point with frankness, fairness, conciliation: they should have no more native police over them; the mistakes as to confiscated cattle of the dead Lobengula had been unavoidable—and, anyhow, nearly all the cattle had perished of the rinderpest; and so on.

Then, these definite complaints disposed of, Rhodes adopted a tone that alarmed his comrades. Cole-

brander could hardly bring himself to translate the imperious, threatening denunciations for their wanton massacres. "I do not upbraid you for making war on the white men," wound up Rhodes, his eyes blazing. "But why did you slay our defenseless women and children? For that you deserve no mercy."

The three beside him held their breath, expecting every instant to hear the battle-cry ring out, to feel the assegais or rifle-bullets.

But the fire and commanding presence of the leader awed the fierce warriors. In silence the indunas bowed their heads as if in recognition that they were before their master.

Rhodes's voice rang out again.

"The past is past and done with. But what of the future? Is it to be peace or war?" He pointed out their defeat, the increasing odds against them.

This was the crucial moment. The four Englishmen could almost hear their hearts beat as they waited for the result.

There was a long silence.

Then one of the oldest chiefs arose from his squatting position in the semicircle. Slowly and with dignity he advanced toward Rhodes, holding above his head a light wand he carried as a symbol of his office.

"See," said he solemnly. "This is my rifle. I cast it at your feet."

He repeated the motion.

"And this is my spear: it too I cast at your feet."

Not a sound was uttered, while, at the same measured gait, he returned to his place.

Then a great shout of assent burst from the lips of the whole tribe.

The Matabele rebellion was ended.

Thus did Cecil John Rhodes risk his life to save the fortunes of his Chartered Company. And his only comment was made to Doctor Sauer as the party rode off:

“It is just such moments as these,” said he, “that make life really worth living.”

PART III

SOLDIERS WHO KNEW NO FEAR

We expect bravery from the soldier. It's all in the day's work for him. To a certain extent, indeed, this attitude is forced upon him—since it is after all easier for most men to face the chances of battle than the risk of being shot for desertion.

Yet no matter how commonplace the abstract idea becomes, no matter how much one may hate war, it is impossible to resist the thrill of human valor in battle. There are thousands upon thousands of such narratives which make even the cold, dead type throb with beat of drum and scream of shell and pounding of hearts; even the quiet reader responds to the surge of excitement that obliterates the thought of death in a fierce white flare of determination to succeed.

Ever since the record of our race commenced, its history has been largely taken up with wars and the daring of those who fought them. A thousand volumes would hold but a fragment of the Epic of the Warrior, begun so unforgettably by Homer's resounding stories of clashing Greeks and Trojans. A whole library of valiant deeds was enacted in the twentieth-century Great War alone—French and German and English and Serbian and Italian and Austrian and Russian and "Anzac" and Canadian and American.

So one might select this handful of tales at random—for what are ten stories out of twenty centuries of almost continuous battling?

They show Kings and Imperial Marshals side by side with British Tommies and American privates, Roman foot-soldiers in armor beside leather-jacketed birdmen—in that companionship where a man's measure is his scorn of death, is his achievement of the impossible under the urge of his blazing spirit.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW HORATIUS HELD THE BRIDGE

THE last of the Roman Kings was Tarquin the Proud. He came to the throne by murder, and held it by tyranny. After twenty-five years of misrule, the people revolted under the leadership of Tarquin's nephew, who had only escaped his father's and brother's fate by pretending to be half-witted and meekly accepting the name of Brutus (stupid). The tyrant was driven out.

Tarquin raised an army among the Tuscans and led it against Rome, but it was defeated, though his son and Brutus killed each other in battle. Again and again the deposed King tried to regain his throne.

At last he formed an alliance with Lars Porsena of Clusium, a powerful prince to the north of Rome, who took up the fugitive's cause as his own. When the Romans refused Porsena's demands to reinstate their former ruler, he warned them when and where he meant to attack, and gathered all his forces for the effort.

Word came of his approach. The people were filled with terror, for this was one of the foremost powers of Italy which was descending upon them. Moreover, the Tuscan ranks were swelled with their bitterest enemies: deserters and exiles, and all who envied their growing power; and they knew only too well what bloody Tarquin's course would be if he succeeded in his attempt.

But the consuls, Publicola and Lucretius, as if to show their disregard of the enemy, proceeded to build

the new-walled city of Sigliura, and placed within it a colony of seven hundred men.

This bravado had little effect upon Porsena, at least.

He assaulted the town, drove out the garrison, and sent them flying in disorder toward Rome. Nor did he give them any chance to recover, but followed so hard upon them that a panic seized the citizens. The gates must be kept open to admit their own people; but the foe was so close upon their heels that it looked as if this meant letting him in also. The walls of Rome they felt were impregnable against anybody; a victorious enemy actually within the gates was another matter.

Great was the confusion as the press of battle swayed to and fro by Tiber's side. The Romans fought valiantly, but they were outnumbered; and in spite of their utmost efforts they were being forced back upon the wooden bridge spanning the Tiber River.

The river was the main natural defense of the city on the west: once in possession of the Sublician bridge, an enemy had a direct entrance, so that the struggle for possession became more and more desperate.

At the critical instant, the consul Publicola sallied out of the gate with a chosen band. For a time his onslaught drove the Tuscans back. But before long he fell, desperately wounded; his followers carried him back out of the fight, and the pressure at the bridge head was renewed.

The other consul, Lucretius, attacked bravely also. He too fell wounded. With both leaders gone, the Romans lost heart and retreated before the fierce onslaughts. A dash of the invaders captured the Janiculum, and from thence the Tuscan host pressed triumphantly forward.

There was clearly but one chance left. The bridge must be destroyed. If they could break it down before Porsena's army could pass, "Father Tiber" would guard his chosen town. For the river was in flood and it would be a bold man who would even venture to try to cross it in the face of a hostile force.

All this was clear as day to those in command. What was not clear at all was how the Tuscans were to be held back even for the short time required to saw and hack through the bridge timbers on the city side. To be sure, it was a narrow passage, where a few men side by side could guard the way. But where were there any who would attempt such a foolhardy feat?

It looked like certain death. Even if one were warrior stout enough to defend himself from those fierce war-wolves thronging forward so eagerly, what would happen when the bridge fell behind him?

There was a moment's silence in the hurried council of war, as the menacing facts impressed themselves on every mind.

Then up stood one Horatius. He was nephew to Horatius the consul, and came of that line which had made the name memorable in the tremendous combat between the Horatii and Curiatii in the reign of Tullius Hostilius. He bore his own record upon his face, for he had received in the wars such a wound between the eyes that at first glance he seemed to have but one great eye in his forehead. Hence he was called Cyclops, the one-eyed, which had somehow been converted by the ignorant populace into Cocles.

He bade his disheartened comrades face the grim truth: the one chance for safety lay in facing the enemy.

"Let him who thinks to escape death by deserting his post reflect that if he flies, there will soon be more

of the enemy in the Palatium and Capital than now are in the Janiculum.

"Besides, death comes to all: how can a man die better than in defending his home and gods?

"Do ye break down the bridge, by sword, by fire, or by any means whatever. What one man can do to hold back the foe, that will I do."

Like a lion among a frightened flock, he strode across to the first entrance to the bridge. Breasting the current of those whose backs were toward the enemy, he reached the narrow passage; and the exulting Tuscans paused in sheer surprise at the sight.

Two Romans there were who were inspired by his example. Spurius Lartius and Herminius, patricians both and proved warriors, rushed forward and took their places, one on his right hand, the other on his left.

The road to Rome was guarded. It was three men against an army. But they were three who were concerned only to purchase with their lives the minutes necessary to destroy the bridge behind them. And already their comrades, shamed into action by their devotion, were hacking desperately at the timbers.

The Tuscan warriors were not slow to accept the challenge. Their champions sprang forward from the serried ranks into the confined space. Warily the three met the onset. Swords and spears clashed upon their ready shields. Their own weapons flashed in the sunlight, then bit deep into their assailants, cleaving through armor and flesh.

One after another of the assailants went down and were dragged away to make room for a fresh attack. Battered, and covered with blood and sweat, Horatius and his supporters glared at each fresh adversary



Encumbered as he was by his heavy armor, Horatius struck out
for the city shore

like some wild boar surrounded by baying hounds, awaiting the instant to strike a fatal blow.

Never a word spoke they, but strained their ears backward for the sound of axe and lever which came from the rear.

Maddened by the check and the sudden obstacle to the easy victory that had lain before them, the Tuscans attacked more furiously than ever. Bitter was the chagrin of Porsena and the traitor Sextus to see their doughtiest warriors laid low, their whole vast force held back by that thin wall of human courage.

A shout from behind made even the combatants turn. "It falls! It falls!" ran the cry from those who wrought so eagerly at destruction. "Back, Horatius! Back Lartius! Back Herminius!"

The leader of the three looked round. Coolly he bade his comrades to retreat. They darted back, and as they sped to safety the timbers cracked beneath their feet.

In a frenzy of rage the assailants hurled a perfect cloud of spears upon the solitary defender. Skilfully protecting himself with his shield, he defied them with taunts that bit deeper than their weapons.

"Slaves are ye all," he called, "slaves of haughty tyrants. Ye have lost your own freedom, yet ye think to take away the liberty of Romans."

There was a mighty crash, above which rose the triumphant shouts of the Romans. The great bridge collapsed into a mass of wreckage, and the swift waters of the Tiber seized hold of truss and girder. Horatius was cut off between the gap and the threatening mass of the enemy.

There was a moment's pause as the realization sank into their minds. Then there rose a hoarse cry from

a thousand throats, demanding vengeance on the one who had wrecked their hopes.

Horatius sprang to the edge of the shattered bridge. He raised his hand aloft.

"Holy Father Tiber," cried he, "receive these arms and this thy soldier in thy propitious stream."

With this invocation, he leaped into the flood. A silence fell upon friend and foe alike as the gallant warrior reappeared on the surface, and, encumbered as he was by his heavy armor, struck out for the city shore.

Recovering themselves, many of the Tuscans hurled javelins at him as he strove against the buffeting waves and current. One of these wounded him in the thigh, but with powerful strokes he swam across the space in safety and rose dripping from the shallows among the cheering multitude of his countrymen.

He had saved Rome, and Rome gave him full meed of gratitude.

Publicola, the consul, decreed that, in spite of the public scarcity, every citizen should present to him one day's provisions for his maintenance; and even the women were proud to be among the hundreds of thousands who thus honored the one-eyed, and now lamed, hero. He was granted as much land as he could encircle with a plough in a day. And a brazen statue of him was set up in the temple of Vulcan, that future generations * might ever remember the son of Rome who was ready to give her all, including life itself.

* A generation grown sceptical, twenty-four centuries later, pronounces the tale of Horatius a legend instead of history. The statue, they surmise, was one to Vulcan himself, the lame, one-eyed god, with whom tradition has confused the valiant man. Be this as it may, the deed is in character: such things have happened, do happen, will happen among men lifted up by patriotism. And the story thrills us to-day, in prose or in Macaulay's trumpet verse, as a typical example of soldier heroism.

CHAPTER XVII

RICHARD LION-HEART TO THE RESCUE

IF ever there were a man who seemed born to fight it was Richard the First of England. Indeed, he would have been badly off had it not been so: for he was at the age of twelve the acknowledged Duke of his mother Eleanor's great land of Aquitaine; and for the next twenty years there was hardly a time when he was not at war with the rebels of his duchy, or with his father or brothers.

While still a mere boy, he reduced the great lords to his authority, and carried his victories to the borders of Spain, becoming renowned as a shrewd leader, as a hot-tempered but generous warrior of enormous personal strength, and as one of the boldest knights errant of his time.

"Woe to the traitors in Aquitaine," sings one of the old minstrels. "Fly before the face of bold Richard, Duke of Aquitaine, for he will annihilate all who oppose, from the greatest to the least!"

More has been written, though less history than legend, of this fighting ruler than of any sovereign of his day. The romancers loved to tell how he thrust his arm down the lion's throat and pulled out its heart before his Austrian captors—thus getting his nickname of *Cœur de Lion*; how he cleft the great chain across the harbor of Acre with one blow of his battle-axe; even of his fondness for Saracen flesh instead of pork; of his imprisonment, and final release through the faithful minstrel, Blondel; and scores of other marvels. Scott

uses many of these tales, in "Ivanhoe" and "The Talisman," more credibly.

But the facts were marvel enough, and the exaggerations seem natural when one gets a glimpse of this mighty man-of-arms in action.

Fortunately there is a record, by an eye-witness, of a characteristic exploit by the Lion-Heart in the Holy Land.

He had started on the Third Crusade in 1189, immediately after being crowned King of England, and had increased his already tremendous reputation by his feats at Acre and in the two years of fighting with the Saracens. He had led his knights to a spot only twelve miles from Jerusalem, but was being compelled to return home without accomplishing the main aim of the expedition: the recapture of the Holy City. Then, in the summer of 1192, word came that Saladin, the Turkish Sultan, had attacked the city of Jaffa, where there were five thousand Christians. The town had been taken with much slaughter, the citadel was besieged, and the survivors were close to surrender.

King Richard was at Acre preparing for his return to England. He was then at the height of his powers—very tall, of shapely build, with curly red-gold hair and beard, and an eye that few could look upon when he was angry. His favorite weapon was a battle-axe weighing twenty pounds, or a great sword beyond ordinary wielding. His chief pleasure in life seemed to be opening a path with these through some desperate *mélée*.

To his tent entered the messengers from Jaffa, relating the sad case of their beleaguered companions.

They had hardly explained the facts when Richard broke out:

"As God lives," said he, "I will be with them and give them all the assistance in my power!"

He gave instant orders for his army to be made ready. His French allies refused to aid, but nothing checked the King's generous ardor. Sending part of his force by land, he embarked with the rest and set sail.

The land force went slowly for fear of an ambuscade. Head-winds delayed Richard's galleys three days.

"The King, vexed at this delay, exclaimed aloud: 'O Lord God, why dost thou detain us here? Consider, I pray Thee, the urgency of the case, and the devoutness of our wishes.'

"No sooner had he prayed thus, than God caused a favorable wind to spring up which wafted his fleet into the harbor of Jaffa."

It was high time. Unknown to the rescuers, the unfortunate survivors in the citadel had just secured from Saladin a respite of a single day, under penalty of a great ransom if aid did not come to them.

Ahead of the hour, the besieged were pressed to fulfil the conditions of the truce. They had no recourse save to begin to pay over the promised bezants to the Turks—whereupon the latter promptly cut off the heads of seven who had paid.

At this treachery the remainder retired to the tower again, and awaited with lamentations the certain death which seemed their fate.

But in the midst of their despair and the Saracen threats from without, one gave a cry of joy. All eyes turned to the harbor. There swept in the royal galleys and rounded-to, ready to anchor and discharge the rescuers they brought.

It is Master Geoffrey de Vinsauf who seems to have

seen these things and set them down for us over seven hundred years ago. Says he:

“The Turks, discovering the arrival of the King’s fleet, sallied down to the seaside with sword and shield, and sent forth showers of arrows: the shore was so thronged with their multitude that there was hardly a foot of ground to spare. Neither did they confine themselves to acting on the defensive, for they shot their arrows at the crews of the ships, and the cavalry spurred their horses into the sea to prevent the King’s men from landing.

“The King, gathering his ships together, consulted with his officers.

“‘Shall we,’ said he, ‘push on against this rabble multitude that occupy the shore, or shall we value our lives more than the lives of those poor fellows who are exposed to destruction for want of our assistance?’

“Some replied that further effort was useless, for it was by no means certain that any remained alive to be saved; and how could they land in the face of such a multitude?

“The King gazed out thoughtfully, and at that moment saw a priest plunge into the water and swim toward the royal galley. When he was received on board, he addressed King Richard with heaving breath and voice almost failing him.

“‘Most noble King, the remnant of our people, waiting for your arrival, are exposed like sheep to be slain, unless the divine grace shall bring you to the rescue.’

“‘Are there any of them still alive then?’ asked the King. ‘And if so, where are they?’

“‘There are still some living—hemmed in, and at the last extremity in front of yonder tower.’

“‘Please God then,’ replied the King, ‘we will die with our brave brothers-in-arms; and a curse light on him who hesitates.’

“The word was forthwith given. The galleys began to move toward the shore. The King dashed forward into the waves, with his thighs unprotected by armor, and up to his waist in the water.

“He soon gained firm footing on the dry strand. Behind him followed Geoffrey du Bois and Peter de Pratelles, while in the rear came all the others rushing through the waves.

“The Turks stood to defend the shore, which was covered with their numerous troops.

“King Richard, with an arbalest* which he carried, drove them back right and left; his companions pressed upon the recoiling enemy, whose courage failed when they recognized King Richard and they no longer dared to meet him.

“The King brandishes his fierce sword which allows them no time to resist, but they yield before his fiery blows, and are driven in confusion with blood and havoc by the King’s men till the shore is entirely cleared of them.

“The landing party then brought together beams, poles, and timbers from the old ships and galleys to make a barricade; and the King placed there some knights, servants, and arbalesters, to keep guard and dislodge the Turks, who seeing they could no longer oppose our troops, dispersed themselves with cries and howling in one general flight.

“King Richard was the first to enter the town, by a winding stair he had remarked in the house of the Templars. Here he found more than three thousand

* A crossbow, with a steel bow.

Turks turning over everything in the houses and carrying off the spoil. The brave King had no sooner entered than he caused his banners to be hoisted on an eminence that they might be seen by the Christians on the tower. These, taking courage at the sight, rushed forth in arms to meet him, and at the sound thereof the Turks were thrown into confusion.

"The King, meanwhile, with brandished sword, still pursued and slaughtered the enemy, thus enclosed between two forces, and filled the streets with the slain, showing no mercy; for there never was a man on earth who so abominated cowardice as he.

"But the King had only three horses with him, and what were three among so many? If we examine the deeds of the ancients, and all the records of former historians, we shall find that there was never a man who so distinguished himself in battle as King Richard did this day.

"When the Turks leaving the town saw his banners floating in the air, a cry was raised on right and left as he sallied forth upon them, and no hail-storm or tempest ever so densely concealed the sky as it was then darkened by the flying arrows of the Turks.

"Saladin, hearing of the King's arrival and how he had slain all who opposed him, was seized with a sudden panic, put spurs to his horse and fled. King Richard with his men still continued the pursuit, slaying and destroying, while his arbalesters made such havoc of the horses that for two miles the traces of their flight were visible.

"He now pitched his tent where Saladin's had been, having thus with so small a body defeated this great army.

“Saladin called together his captains and thus addressed them:

“‘Has he then beaten all of us? Have they come from Acre to defeat us thus? By what superiority have they been able to accomplish this? In infantry, as well as cavalry, our army was much superior.’

“One of those present replied:

“‘My Lord, they have neither horses nor beasts of burden of any kind, save three horses only which their wonderful King found in Jaffa. I think, however, that the King himself could easily be surprised for he lies almost alone in his tent, and fully worn out with fatigue. Whoever seizes him will at once put an end to our labors and the whole campaign.’

“It was then given out among the Turks what a reproach it was to them that so many thousands had been defeated by so small a force, and that Jaffa had been retaken.

“In this manner they murmured to one another at what had taken place, and trembled with confusion.

“On the next day, being Sunday, the King diligently set to work to repair the walls of Jaffa, and continued his exertions on Monday and Tuesday, that some protection might be furnished by them, such as it was, though the repairs were made without lime or cement; but this could not be avoided, for an immense army of Turks was still close at hand.

“Meanwhile Count Henry arrived in a galley from Cæsarea, where the rest of the army was detained. So that the King on this emergency could muster out of his whole army only fifty-five knights, besides infantry, arbalesters, and retainers, and two thousand Genoese and Pisans. Of horses he had no more than fifteen, whether good or bad.”

Presently two groups of Saracens, the Menelones of Aleppo and the Cordivi, decided to wipe out the former disgrace by seizing King Richard in his tent. Accordingly they set out during the night and had almost accomplished their object. But luckily a dispute as to precedence arose among them; and a Genoese, rising early, saw the helmets gleaming in the morning light.

"He immediately rushed with all speed into the camp, calling out: 'To arms! to arms!'

"The King was wakened by the noise. Starting up, he leaped from the bed, put on his coat of mail, and summoned his men.

"Lives there a man who would not be shaken by such an alarm?

"The enemy rush unawares, armed against unarmed, many against few, for our men had no time to arm, or even to dress themselves. The King himself and many others proceeded to the fight without their cuishes,* some even without their breeches; and they armed the best they could though they were to fight the whole day.

"While they were thus arming in haste, the Turks drew near. The King mounted his horse with only ten other knights. These alone had horses, and some even of those they had were base and worthless animals, unused to arms. The common men were skilfully drawn out in ranks and troops, with each a captain to command them. The knights were posted nearer the sea, having the church of St. Nicholas on the left, because the Turks had directed their principal attack on that quarter, and the Pisans and Genoese were beyond the suburban gardens.

* Armor for the thighs.

"Oh, who could fully relate the terrible attacks of the infidels? The Turks at first rushed on with horrid yells, hurling their javelins and shooting their arrows.

"Our men prepared to receive their furious attack, each fixing his right knee in the ground, that so they might better hold together and maintain their position; whilst there, the thighs of their left legs were bent, and their left hands held their shields; stretched out before them in their right hands they held their lances, of which the lower ends were fixed in the ground, with their iron heads pointed threateningly toward the enemy.

"Between each two men thus covered with shields, the skilful King placed an arbalester, and another behind him to bend the arbalest as quickly as possible, so that the man in front might discharge his shot while the other was loading. This did much harm to the enemy.

"Thus everything was prepared as well as the shortness of the time allowed, and our little army was drawn up in order. The King passed along the ranks and exhorted every man to be firm and not flinch.

"'Courage, my brave fellows,' said he, 'and let not the attack of the enemy disturb you. Everything may be borne by brave men. There is no chance for flight, for the enemy surround us, and to attempt to flee is to provoke certain death.

"'Be valiant, therefore, and let our urgency sharpen your courage: brave soldiers should either conquer nobly or gloriously die. But before we die let us do what may avenge our deaths. This will be the end of our labors, the termination of our life and battle.'

"These words were hardly spoken when the hostile army rushed with ferocity upon them, in seven troops,

each of which contained about a thousand horse. Our men received their charge with their right feet planted firm against the sand, and remained immovable. Their lances formed a wall against the enemy, who would have assuredly broken through if our men had in the least given way.

“The first line of the Turks recoiled, when our cross-bowmen plied them with a shower of missiles, slaying large numbers of men and horses. Another line came on and were also driven back. In this way the Turks came on like a whirlwind, feigning attack that our men might be induced to give way.

“Seeing this the King and his ten mounted knights put spurs to their horses and charged right into the middle of the foe, upsetting them right and left and piercing many with their lances. They pulled up at last because they found they had broken entirely through the Turkish lines.

“Looking about, Richard saw the noble Earl of Leicester dismounted and fighting bravely on foot. He rushed to his rescue, snatched him from the hands of the enemy, and replaced him on his horse.

“A multitude of Turks now advanced: enraged at our success they rushed at the royal standard of the lion, for they would rather have slain King Richard than a thousand others.

“In the midst of the *mêlée*, the King saw Ralph de Mauleon dragged off prisoner, but, spurring his horse to a gallop, in a moment he had freed him; for King Richard was a very giant in the battle, and was everywhere in the field—now here, now there, wherever the attack of the Turks raged the hottest. There was no one, however gallant, that would not readily yield to him the pre-eminence. He slew numbers with his



Richard and Saladin in battle

sword which shone like lightning: some were cloven in two from the helmet to the teeth, while others had heads or arms lapped off at a single blow.

“Many of our men were wounded; and as the weight of the battle became heavier, the galley-men withdrew in the galleys that had brought them. The Turks pressed forward into the town once more. The King slew three mounted men with his own hand, the remainder were driven back, and Richard succeeded in bringing back the galley-men to the fight.

“No sooner had he returned than with all his fury he fell upon the thickest ranks of the enemy, driving them back and routing them, so that even those who were at a distance and untouched by him were overwhelmed by the throng of their fellows as they retreated.

“Never was there such an attack made by one man! He actually pierced the middle of the hostile army, opening a space about him like the tried warrior he was. The Turks at once closed about him, hoping to overwhelm him by numbers.

“Our men, losing sight of their King, feared he would be slain; and when one proposed they should advance to rescue him, the lines could hardly contain themselves. Yet clearly any break in the front meant that all would surely be destroyed, so they stood fast.

“What can one think of King Richard, hemmed in by the enemy, a single man against so many thousands? Who ever heard of such a man? No adverse storm could sink his bravery. His valor was ever-blooming.

“Inured to battle from his tenderest years, to whom famous Roland could not be considered equal, he remained invincible even in the midst of the enemy, and

his body seemed impenetrable as brass to any kind of weapon.

"In his right hand he brandished his sword, whose rapid descent ever broke the ranks on either side of him. Such was his vigor amid that host, that he mowed down Turks as reapers mow down corn with their sickles.

"He who felt one of these blows had no need of a second. The King cut down men and horses alike. The more he saw himself separated from his own men, the more the enemy sought to overwhelm him, the more conspicuous did his valor shine.

"There was one magnificently caparisoned emir who seemed to reproach the rest with cowardice, intimating by gestures that he was going to end the disgrace. Putting spurs to his horse, he charged through the press upon King Richard.

"Brandishing his dripping sword, the King with a single mighty blow smote off not only his head but his shoulder and right arm.

"The Turks were struck with terror at this incredible feat and fell back on all sides, scarcely daring to shoot at this human lion from a distance with their arrows.

"Thereupon the King returned to his anxious friends, safe and unhurt, though he was stuck all over with javelins like a deer pierced by the hunter, and the trappings of his horse were thickly covered with arrows.

"Thus like a brave soldier he returned from the contest, and a bitter contest it was, for it had lasted from sunrise to sunset. It may seem incredible that so small a body of men endured so long a conflict; but we cannot doubt the truth of it, for in that battle only one or two of our men were slain. But the number of the Turkish horses which lay dead upon the field

exceeded fifteen hundred; and of the Turks themselves more than seven hundred were killed.

“Yet they did not carry back King Richard, as they had boasted, as a present to Saladin; but on the contrary he and his brave followers performed so many deeds of valor in the sight of the Turks that the enemy shuddered to behold them.”

It is little wonder that when Saladin ridiculed his leaders for their failure they should have replied that the deeds of “Melech Ric” were beyond human nature. In fact, for generations afterward Syrian riders used to ask of a horse shying in the dark if it saw Melech Ric!

CHAPTER XVIII

"THE BRAVEST OF THE BRAVE"

THE great Napoleon was a connoisseur of bravery. He needed it in the business of conquering the world to which he devoted his genius. Such a group as his marshals—Ney, Murat, Junot, Lannes, Macdonald, Massena—would be difficult to match in all history; and, different as they were, they had all been picked from obscurity by the Emperor on account of their pre-eminence in this quality.

When we read, therefore, that Napoleon, as well as his other generals, christened Marshal Ney "the bravest of the brave," we know this must have been a soldier indeed.

He had a "marble calmness" amid extreme danger while studying the enemy's position; yet neither Murat nor Lannes could carry his followers into a more desperate charge when the time came. No hope seemed too forlorn for him to see the chance left instead of the obstacles. And never did his qualities show more brilliantly than in the retreat from Russia.

Ney was a cooper's son, whose longing for a soldier's life drove him at the age of eighteen to run away and enlist in a hussar regiment. It was in 1788. He was of medium height, with a wide forehead, blue eyes, and a ruddy complexion. His carrot-colored hair was accompanied as usual by a quick temper; but *le rougeat* ("Reddy") became a hard-working soldier, a champion fencer, and expert horseman; his tireless persistence soon won him another name, "the Indefatigable."

It took two years for him to become a corporal. In 1792 he was sergeant-major. The war with Austria began the years of conflict which were to transform Europe; and with opportunity Ney rose fast. In 1794 General Kleber reported that "Captain Ney, who is doing duty as adjutant-general, has performed prodigies of valor"; and by 1799 he had continued his steady advance till he was in command of the Army of the Rhine. He shared in the victories of Marengo and Hohenlinden in 1800, and next year met Napoleon, then First Consul.

When Napoleon became Emperor in 1804, Ney was one of the eighteen generals who were created Marshals of France. From that time on, Marshal Ney was one of the main props of the Emperor's military power. He was made Duke of Elchingen after his victory at that town; he won fresh honors against the Prussians at Jena, against the Russians at Friedland, and on a hundred other battle-fields.

Then came 1812 and the fateful invasion of Russia, where Ney was destined to reach his true greatness, not amid brilliant victories, but in the face of disaster.

Napoleon had staked all his fortunes on his Grand Army and hurled it into Russia. He had won the costly victory at Borodino where Ney's brilliant attacks for fifteen hours brought him the new title of Prince de la Moskowa. He had found the Russian capital city of Moscow a smoking ruin instead of the needed winter quarters. Forced to fall back, he had divided the remains of his army, giving charge of the rear-guard—the post of honor and danger—to Ney.

On November 14, what was left of this force reached the town of Smolensk. Between cold and snow and

hunger and the Russian harrying, this amounted to only three thousand men. There was not one complete squadron of cavalry. A dozen badly horsed guns and scant ammunitions for those was all his artillery.

His duty was still to take the brunt of the enemy's attacks and save what fragments of his column he could by pressing forward to a junction with the Emperor. He hoped to find one of the other corps at Krasnoi, and to rejoin Napoleon at Orsza, beyond the Dnieper River.

On the 17th of November Ney set out on this hazardous retreat. He had built his force up to five thousand men. He took with him but six guns, leaving much artillery, with wagons and all sorts of supplies which he could neither carry nor destroy.

It took more courage than any charge, that start. The country ahead was almost unknown. The cold was so intense that sentries could hardly do their duty at night. No one realized so keenly as Ney how inadequate was this wretched handful of men, with but a semblance of cavalry or artillery, harassed incessantly by the enemy's attacks.

Yet the marshal was serene and confident, cheering officers and men with praises for the recent repulse of an attack, with assurances that by the next afternoon they ought to join Davout's corps at Krasnoi.

All that day they marched steadily, breaking up the Cossack dashes without much difficulty. At sunrise next morning they set out again, every thought going forward to the hoped-for meeting with their comrades that afternoon.

The Cossacks hung upon flank and rear of the column all morning. Marauding parties would swoop down

and cut off a straggling group or company, but they did not venture to attack the ordered lines in the face of regular volleys.

The thunder of cannon was heard ahead. Nobody knew what it meant. Ney did not like the sound, but there was nothing to do save push on. The 2d Division, which was in the lead, reported Cossacks directly ahead; little was thought of it, since these restless irregulars often cut across the line of march.

Presently the vanguard neared Krasnoi. To their surprise they came upon a few hundred Frenchmen and half a dozen guns. These proved to be a portion of the 1st Corps which had become separated from the main body of Davout's force by an attack of the Russians.

Their commander knew nothing except that there were Russians ahead in large numbers, and somewhere beyond them was the rest of the French army.

The weather had moderated, so that there was a dense fog over everything. One could get glimpses of the usual bands of Cossacks on every side, but beyond these shifting, blurring groups all was a gray, impenetrable wall.

Ney joined this fragment of Davout's corps to his own, formed his men in line of battle, and pushed ahead to meet whatever might befall.

Suddenly the blankness was pierced by the flashes and thunder of artillery. A battery of forty guns opened on the advancing column at short range. The leader had glimpses, too, of masses of Russians ahead drawn up in battle array.

He fell back, disposing his men for the attack he expected. To his surprise, a single Russian officer appeared under a flag of truce.

This officer informed the marshal he was come to demand the surrender of the 3d Corps.

"A marshal of France never surrenders," replied Ney. "Go back to those who sent you."

But the Russian begged him to consider the situation calmly. His superiors had far too high a regard for the famous Frenchman to suggest anything unworthy of him. The fact was, however, that General Kutusoff had broken the French lines at Krasnoi. The columns of Eugène and Davout had lost thousands of killed and wounded, their guns and supplies, and had barely escaped to join the Emperor.

These pitiable fragments of the Grand Army had probably united somewhere ahead, it was true. But between them and Ney there was at that moment a force of eighty thousand Russians, with plenty of artillery. Any experienced soldier must see that his case was hopeless. If he wished to verify these statements, a brief truce would be granted for that purpose.

Ney did not need to verify anything. He saw in a flash what had happened, and just how bad his situation was.

What to do was another matter. He must have thought hard as he looked from this spruce messenger in his gay uniform to his own gaunt and ragged officers, all waiting in front of their men for his decision.

Not many men would have hesitated at all. The case was too clear. But Ney was only making up his mind *how*, and not *if*, he was to do what he had set out to do. An accident gave him what seemed a clue.

To the surprise of everybody, there was another flash from the front, a heavy report, and the sound of balls overhead. One of the Russian batteries had opened fire on some false alarm.

"You are a prisoner, sir," said Ney to the envoy. "Your people have fired on us while you are in my lines, which forfeits the protection of your white flag."

The point was valid, and Ney had the Russian disarmed and guarded. He had resolved to attack the enemy, hoping that the very audacity of the attempt might give it success. The fog, and the failure of the messenger to report, might serve him by keeping the Russians in doubt up to the last moment.

It would be hard to recall a bolder operation than the charge which followed. Inspired by their commander, these war-worn veterans plunged forward, only knowing that ahead was the enemy, and whether two to one or twenty to one, their business was to cut their way through.

The attempt was not within human power. Razout's division was driven back by a hail of grape-shot from the batteries. Overwhelmingly superior numbers of cavalry and infantry attacked the French on both flanks. Only superhuman efforts by Ney himself beat back this onset long enough for Razout's division to extricate themselves from their danger.

The disastrous and confused struggle was finally ended by darkness. It seemed like a miracle that there was any 3d Corps left at all. But the facts were gloomy enough. The men were beaten and discouraged. Half the guns were gone. Some of the regiments had lost more than half their numbers. The great Russian army was still between them and their Emperor. If Ney's case had been difficult before, it was surely hopeless now.

Not a man in the little force understood what was in Ney's mind. There could be nothing left save surrender on the best terms obtainable.

Yet to their amazement they found themselves formed into marching order somehow—and presently knew they were returning toward Smolensk.

The wounded who could stand marched with the rest. Occasional groups of fugitives fell into place as they proceeded. The darkness was a slight protection from the dreaded Cossacks for the time being, but every one felt the fatal moment was merely being postponed a few hours.

Yet General de Fezensac wrote afterward that the mere presence of Marshal Ney somehow carried reassurance to the hopeless ones.

“Without knowing what he intended or what he could do, we knew that he would do something. His confidence in himself was equal to his courage. The greater the danger, the more prompt was his resolution, and once he had decided what course to take, he never doubted of success.

“Thus, even at a moment like this his face showed no sign of indecision or anxiety. Every one turned his eyes to him, but no one ventured to question him.

“At last, seeing one of his staff near, the marshal said in a low voice:

“‘It is not well with us.’

“‘What are you going to do?’ replied the officer.

“‘Get to the other side of the Dnieper.’

“‘Where is the way to it?’

“‘We shall find out.’

“‘But what if it is not frozen over?’)

“‘It will be.’”

He was still the leader, and he had no more thought of surrendering than when he started. Somewhere to the north was the Dnieper River. Somewhere beyond was Napoleon’s Grand Army. They would find the

river, cross after dark on the ice, and join their countrymen as planned. Simple enough—if they could manage any of these things.

The only map Ney had was almost useless. "But presently," relates his biographer, "he led the column away from the road across snowy fields to the left. In a hollow he dismounted, cleared some snow away, and found as he expected the ice on a stream. He broke the ice and found in what direction the water was running.

"'The stream must flow into the Dnieper,' he said. 'It will guide us to the river-bank.'

"At sunset he halted at a small village. The peasants had fled, leaving their small stores of food in the houses. Fires were lighted, more fires than were actually needed, in order to impress the pursuing Cossacks with a false idea of his numbers. The men bivouacked and had supper. The many wounded were sheltered in the houses, where the surgeons dressed their wounds. An outpost line was formed, and after the exchange of a few shots the Cossacks drew off to a respectful distance. They were quite satisfied that they had marked the column down for destruction next morning.

"But at eight o'clock, leaving a few men to keep the fires alight and follow later, Ney silently reformed his column and marched to the Dnieper bank, guided by one of the villagers, whom some of Ney's Polish soldiers had captured and who promised to show him a bend of the river where the ice was firm enough to cross. At nine o'clock he stood on the river-bank. The ice had partly thawed, but there was a hard frost, and he decided not to attempt the crossing at once, but to wait till after midnight. The three hours would make the ice firmer and give time for more of the strag-

glers to come in. His perfect self-possession was shown by the fact that, as soon as he had reconnoitred the river and given his orders, he wrapped himself in his cloak and lying down on the snow slept soundly till midnight.

"Then the marshal rose and began to direct the crossing. The ice was treacherous, and it was found that the only safe way to cross was by sending the men over in single file at several points. Fires lighted on both banks showed the way. When most of the infantry and some thousands of the disbanded fugitives had crossed, an attempt was made to send some horses and wagons over the ice. A few horses crossed safely, but several broke through and were lost. A wagon laden with wounded men crashed through the ice and disappeared, and a few of the wounded were seen struggling in the chilly water or clinging to fragments of floating ice. Some of them were rescued. In one case Ney himself was the rescuer. Crawling on hands and knees along the ice, he reached the huge gap that had opened in it and dragged out a man who was clinging to the broken edge. It proved to be a staff-officer, Captain de Briqueville, who had the good fortune to survive the horrors of the retreat and return to France.

"After this accident it was decided that all the guns and wagons must be abandoned on the south bank. The march began, at first for a few miles northward in order to gain some distance from the river, then once more to the westward. For some hours of the long night the men bivouacked in a belt of pines and made fires to warm themselves. Ney hoped that he had shaken off all pursuit and that there were no Russians north of the river. He expected that two long marches would bring him to Orsza.

"But early next day there was a disappointing discovery. Before dawn some Cossacks were surprised asleep in a farm. Then after the column had been moving across open snow-covered fields and through belts of wood, at last it came upon a highway, and there the snow was trampled with horse-hoofs and there were the tracks of sledge-runners. A large body of mounted troops had evidently passed that way within a few hours.

"Platoff, the hetman of the Cossacks, had crossed the Dnieper the day before at the head of some thousands of his men, irregulars such as had been harassing the French retreat day after day, and with them several squadrons of drilled regulars accompanied by a number of light field-guns mounted on sledges. It was not expected that any French troops would be found on the north bank, and the column was sent there to make a rapid march, in order to fall upon the right flank of the Grand Army. It was not long before Cossack patrols came upon Ney's little column toiling through the half-melted snow, with the miserable crowd of disbanded men straggling after it. Some of the Cossacks galloped off to carry the news to their hetman; the rest, rapidly reinforced by other bands of wild spearmen, rode in among the fugitives, killed numbers of them, and drove the rest back to the protection of the column.

"Platoff was between Ney and Orsza, and farther from the river than the French. He turned back to attack them. At first Ney had hoped that he would have to deal only with the worrying tactics of the irregulars. They never charged home, and were easily driven off by the musketry-fire when they came within close range, but no one who straggled from the formed

ranks of the French escaped their spears. The situation became more serious when Platoff's main body came in sight and his light artillery opened fire. It needed all Ney's courage and energy to face this new danger.

"He now commanded only a small force of infantry, encumbered by a mob of disbanded men, and having with them not a gun or a wagon so that they had only the small supply of cartridges and food that the men carried. They were opposed by a numerically superior force of mounted men with artillery. If they marched with closed-up ranks the Cossack leader could choose his own distance and keep them under artillery-fire. If they opened out, the cavalry would be upon them. But for two days and the intervening night Ney faced this terrible situation, marching slowly for most of the time, snatching a brief rest when for a while the enemy's attacks slackened, and losing men continually. In the course of the 19th all the disbanded men had disappeared. Some had been made prisoners, a few were wandering about the country or hiding in the woods, but most had been mercilessly massacred by the Cossacks. There was hope only for those who could keep their places in the marching ranks. For those who fell wounded by the enemy's fire, or out of sheer exhaustion, there was no chance. They mostly accepted their fate with stoical indifference. A sergeant of the 4th Infantry dropped with his thigh shattered by a shot. 'Here's another man done for,' he said coolly to his comrades. 'Take my knapsack. You will find it useful.' But there were moments when it seemed as if the sorely tried nerve of the men was breaking down. More than once it was all that Ney and his officers could do to steady the ranks, as



Marshal Ney and the rear-guard in the retreat from Moscow

with a wild 'Hurrah!' the storm of Cossack lancers came surging round them.

"Ney marched his men in two columns, one under his personal command, the other under General Henin. When in close action with the Russians, one would show a bold front and beat off the charges, while the other moved on and gained ground. If both had to make a stand they could cross their fire. During the 19th he gradually drew nearer to the course of the river, and in the afternoon found some respite from the enemy's attacks when he gained the shelter of the pine woods along the Dnieper. Here he rested for a while in the night, but marched again before dawn. He left the woods, and the ground became difficult as the track was intersected by the numerous ravines formed by streams running down to the river. At each of these obstacles some of the weary men broke down and were left behind. The attacks of the enemy began again at daybreak. Platoff marched on a parallel track to Ney's rapidly dwindling force, now cannonading it with his sledge-mounted artillery, now launching his Cossack cavalry in charge after charge. Ney was the life and soul of the dogged resistance that was everywhere offered to these onsets. Moving on foot among the men, now here, now there, he encouraged them by telling them that the worst was over; that next day they would be resting in safety at Orsza; that he had sent on an officer to tell the Emperor they were coming, and that soon a helping hand would be held out to them."

By a miracle this messenger had really reached Orsza. The Emperor had just left with his imperial guard (reduced from thirty-five thousand to six thousand men); but Marshals Eugène and Davout were over-

joyed when they heard that Ney was still alive, since they had had no hope of ever seeing him again.

Eugène set out at once with a strong force, and at length guided the little band through the darkness to his location by signal-guns. Of the six thousand who had marched from Smolensk, there were left less than nine hundred. But Ney was at their head. He and Eugène fell into each other's arms.

When the Emperor heard of Ney's feat he exclaimed: "He is the bravest of the brave." He was cheered by this piece of fortune. "I shall yet save my eagles," said he.

And Ney's reward? It was to continue in his charge of the rear-guard through the remaining month of that ghastly retreat which finally reduced the "Grand Army" to a mere tragic memory.

But the calm historian of to-day declares that but for the indomitable courage and skill of Michel Ney, the Emperor himself would never have escaped alive from the Russian trap into which he had marched so confidently.

It's an odd fact that many of the experts in the occult mysteries of the Rosicrucians assert that Marshal Ney did not perish on that December day of 1815, when history records, after being condemned as a traitor, he was shot in the Luxembourg Gardens. These mystics have written volumes to prove that the gallant warrior, being also an Initiate, exercised the powers of the instructed philosophers—and was living peacefully many years afterward in Rowan County, North Carolina!

CHAPTER XIX

A SWEDISH CONQUEROR

ONE day in November, 1697, a review was being held of the royal troops at Stockholm, Sweden.

It was not a very large force of men that marched past the commander-in-chief. Indeed, they would seem like a pitiful handful to us to-day. But these soldiers had at that time a reputation beyond any in Europe. For a hundred and fifty years, under Gustavus Vasa, under his grandson Gustavus Adolphus the Great, under each successive ruler, they had made the Swedish arms feared by Denmark, Poland, Russia, and the loosely knit states of the empire. They had conquered great provinces of what is now Russia and Germany, besides a hundred towns in the German states. Thrones shook when the Swedes descended from the north.

The pride of this record was in the bearing of the soldiers as they manœuvred in precision that told of long and thorough discipline.

But the reviewing general was a strange contrast to his veterans. He was a mere boy, fifteen years old the summer before. Tall and slender, his large blue eyes were gentle, almost diffident. He was dressed rather magnificently. And while there was a grim expression about his smooth mouth and chin, he seemed absurdly out of place as the commander of such a body.

To be sure, he was the eldest son of the King of Sweden, and the King had died a few months before. But though the law of the country declared that a monarch came of age at fifteen, his autocratic father,

Charles XI, had deferred his accession till eighteen; and the boy's grandmother had taken over the power as Regent.

The last regiment clanked past, saluting. The review was over. Yet the young Charles stood still, silent and thoughtful.

There was an awkward pause among the group of dignitaries behind him. Nobody knew what to do.

Presently State Councillor Piper moved forward.

"May I take the liberty," he said, with concealed sarcasm, "of asking your Majesty of what you are thinking so seriously?"

The prince started.

"I am thinking," he replied, "that I feel worthy of the command of those fine fellows, and that it is not my will that either they or I should receive our orders from a woman."

It was the councillor's turn to be surprised. He gave a keen, appraising look at the young man, made some non-committal assent, and the company left the field.

But the astute Piper had had a glimpse of a possibility which gave him no rest. Like a prudent courtier he had studied his future ruler. He knew how the boy had learned to manage a horse at seven; his fondness for hunting and military exercises; his occasional flashes of temper and his invincible obstinacy; how he had replied to his tutor when the latter had reproved his wish to be like Alexander the Great—because the Macedonian had "lived only thirty-two years." "Ah!" said Charles, "and is not that long enough when one has subdued kingdoms?" And he felt that the boy of yesterday was a man to help whom was to help oneself.

He sounded some important noblemen, the councillors of the regency. The logic of the situation was irresistible. The officials tried to outdo each other in hastening the scheme. In three days the councillors had laid the matter before the surprised and reluctant Queen Regent, the states general had been convoked and had unanimously voted for the change—and the boy of fifteen was Charles XII, King of Sweden.

On December 24, he rode into Stockholm on a sorrel horse shod with silver, a sceptre in his hand. The crowds in the streets cheered him wildly, noting his firm seat, his confidence and royal air.

Then he stood before the Archbishop of Upsala, to whom venerable tradition gave the right of crowning Sweden's monarch, a right jealously maintained by the clergy.

The solemn ceremony proceeded. The Archbishop, in his gorgeous robes, anointed the young ruler. Taking the crown, he held it ready to place on his head. But, quick as thought, Charles straightened himself, seized the crown, and with a proud glance at the Archbishop, crowned himself.

The thousands who looked on broke into wild applause. There was something magnificent about such haughty arrogance.

Nothing happened for some time after Charles's accession, however, to justify the new estimate made of him. He made Piper a count and gave him charge of most affairs. As for himself he did little, seeming too haughty to descend to details of government. When he appeared at the council, he would generally cross his legs on the table, and pay little attention to what was going on.

Everybody concluded he was after all a weak repre-

sentative of the fighting Swedish Kings; and before long three of his neighbors decided that the time had come to take from Sweden her territories on the south and east of the Baltic Sea.

The King of Denmark, who had a standing quarrel with Charles's brother-in-law, the Duke of Holstein; King Frederick Augustus of Poland (also Elector of Saxony), and the Czar of Russia, Peter the Great, combined to seize what each wanted of the great kingdom which Sweden's rulers had built up by conquest and confirmed by solemn treaty.

The Czar had just returned from his amazing two years of travel, and work in the shipyards of Holland and England. He was transforming his vast country from barbarism to civilization. He had begun to build the new capital of St. Petersburg, to drill his troops, cast cannon, construct ships. In a hundred ways Russia was waking up. She was a formidable antagonist.

The news of this danger appalled the Swedes. A twenty years' peace had left them without proved generals. There seemed no help in their ruler. They cast about for some plan of treating with these enemies, to see with how little concession they could be satisfied.

This view was broached in the King's council. While it was being discussed, Charles rose:

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have resolved never to engage in an unjust war, but on the other hand, never to conclude a just war but by the ruin of my foes.

"I have made up my mind. I intend to attack the first who declares war against me, and when I have conquered him, I hope to strike terror into the rest."

The timid were fired by the young King's spirit, the

bolder rejoiced. From that moment Charles stopped being a spectator and took command.

In fact, this crisis seemed to crystallize the boy's whole character. He forsook every pleasure he had indulged in; he stopped drinking wine for the rest of his life; he replaced his former magnificent clothing with a common soldier's uniform; he forsook the society of the court ladies, as if determined to avoid every softness. In every way he subjected himself to the most severe military discipline. With absolute single-mindedness, he threw all the energy he possessed into the one ambition of making himself a warrior.

The King of Denmark had already invaded Holstein. Charles's brother-in-law was hard pressed. A force of eight thousand men was sent to aid him; and in a flash the conflict widened, as troops from half a dozen petty German states joined one side or the other.

Charles was bear-hunting when news came that the Saxons had invaded his province of Livonia. He captured his bear, with net and forked club, hastened to the capital, arranged everything for the defense of his realm, and in an incredibly short time had his fleet of forty-three vessels ready to sail.

The English and Dutch fleets had arrived in the Baltic to help against the Danes, who had broken the treaty of Altena by attacking Holstein. Charles joined forces with them, and the Danish fleet, refusing battle, allowed the allies to pass. They soon approached Copenhagen.

The King at once proposed to his commander, General Renschild, that they should attack the Danish capital. His audacity silenced all objections. With a force of eight hundred men in small boats, and a few frigates to cover the landing, the attacking party moved

along the shore, while the Danes followed on land watching to see where the attempt would be made.

At Humblebek, seven miles from Copenhagen, the invaders paused. Immediately the Danes threw up intrenchments, and prepared infantry, cavalry, and guns to resist the attack.

As soon as everything was in readiness, Charles jumped into the leading boat. The tiny force rowed straight toward shore, under cover of broadsides from the vessels, but assailed by constant fire from the enemy.

When they were a hundred yards from land, the King's impatience would not permit him to remain inactive any longer. Sword in hand, he leaped overboard, up to his waist, his officers and men following.

The bullets whistled around their ears.

"What is that noise?" asked the King of Major Stuart, who was beside him.

"It is the balls from the muskets they are firing at us."

"Ah!" said Charles, "that shall henceforth be my band."

As he spoke, the major received a bullet in the shoulder. A lieutenant on the other side fell dead.

Nothing daunted, the King charged straightforward at the head of his men. The Danes were so overcome at this show of resolution that they broke and fled. Without a check, Charles took possession of their intrenchments.

His first act was to fall on his knees and thank God for this auspicious beginning. Then he laid out redoubts, made his camp secure, and sent back to Scania for reinforcements.

Everything went like clockwork. The very next day these nine thousand fresh troops were with him.

The inhabitants of Copenhagen gave up hope at this sudden and irresistible onset. An embassy came out to beg that the city might not be bombarded.

Charles agreed on condition that they should give a ransom of four hundred thousand dollars, and furnish provisions, agreeing to pay for the latter. To the great surprise of the conquered, he not only kept his word, but held his soldiers under such strict discipline that marauding was unknown.

The King of Denmark made some fruitless proclamations from his camp in Holstein. But his capital was at the mercy of his enemy, his fleet was hopelessly outnumbered, and he presently began to treat for peace. Charles forced the negotiations through in the same headlong style in which he had attacked. In six weeks he had disposed of one foe, freed the Duke of Holstein, and secured for him the expenses of the war.

The greater part of his task remained, however. The King of Poland had laid siege to Riga; and while he had been unable to make headway against the stout defense of old Count d'Alberg, and had gladly abandoned the attempt on the representations of the Dutch, word came that his ally, the Czar, was advancing from Russia with a great army of one hundred thousand men and one hundred and fifty cannon. Then, as the early rigors of winter shut in that land of ice and snow, the Russians attacked Narva, the most eastern town of the Swedish dominions.

Charles hastened his preparations. Two hundred transports conveyed his army across the sea.

Landing at Pernaw, on the Gulf of Riga, he struck across country by forced marches. He waited for

nothing, not even for the main body of his own twenty thousand men; and presently he arrived, with four thousand horse and four thousand infantry, at the Russian outposts.

The first detachment of five thousand did not wait to find out the facts, but retired precipitately. The second twenty thousand was infected by their flight and also fell back. Charles pushed straight on. The next thirty thousand were driven in without the slightest delay, and the Swedes confronted an intrenched army of ten times their size, with strong artillery.

Charles hardly gave his men time to rest after their terrific marches, but ordered an immediate attack.

One officer remonstrated at this rashness in the face of such tremendous odds.

"Surely," said the King, "you can have no doubt but that I with my eight thousand brave Swedes shall trample down eighty thousand Russians!"

The officer turned away. The King stepped after him. As if fearing his outburst had been boastful, he said:

"Do you not agree with me that I have a double advantage over the enemy? First, because their horse will be useless to them, and secondly because, as the position is cramped, their numbers will only incommode them."

There was no answering such reasoning. At noon of November 30, 1700, the Swedes charged with fixed bayonets, behind a fire of cannon which opened some breaches in the fortifications.

The snow was driving with them as they burst through upon the enemy. Charles himself, at the head of half his force, attacked the right wing, hoping to meet the Czar in person. The latter had gone, how-

ever, to meet the reinforcements of thirty thousand men which he had thought it necessary to send for.

At the first onset Charles was hit in the shoulder, but it was a spent ball, which did him no injury.

His horse was shot under him. He jumped upon another, exclaiming: "These fellows make me take exercise."

Leading and giving orders at the same time, he swept on like a whirlwind. In three hours the trenches were carried. The little band of Swedes drove the Russians headlong, killing more than ten to one.

The right wing broke, and fled in disorder toward the River Narva, forty thousand pursued by less than four thousand. As the disorderly mob thronged over the bridge, the wooden structure broke down. Many were drowned. Those who had not reached the bridge, turned aimlessly, and rallied for a time behind some buildings.

Charles and his Swedes gave them no time to recover; in a short while the Russian generals surrendered.

The general officers were put under a guard; the soldiers and under-officers were disarmed, taken to the river, and embarked in boats to return home. The artillery was seized.

Then night fell. The King took up a position ready to attack the left wing, which still held its ground, though badly battered. The situation was still perilous enough. The enemy had still thirty thousand troops against his six thousand five hundred. But his mind was calm enough for him to lie on the ground wrapped in his cloak and snatch a few hours' sleep till daybreak should make it possible to complete his work.

At two in the morning, a message came that General Wade, who commanded the remaining Russians, was

willing to surrender on the same terms granted his companions. Charles at once accepted. A strange scene followed.

In the gray morning, across the snow-covered landscape, a long irregular line of Russians approached. In the lead marched their commander, bareheaded like his troops.

The thirty thousand defiled past the King, in front of his compact regiments containing about six thousand five hundred men. The officers threw down their swords and colors as they passed; the private soldiers dropped their muskets. The interminable line wound on toward the river, intent only upon escaping home.

Charles was glad enough to let them go, since it was manifestly impossible to guard so many prisoners with his little force. He treated the captured officers with the greatest consideration, and in his reports of this incredible victory exhibited a modesty as striking as his prowess had been. From that time on, however, his people and his army looked upon the "Lion of the North" as invincible in battle.

While the Russian people were imploring the aid of St. Nicholas against the sorcery which they felt must have defeated their great army, the Czar himself set about repairing the disaster. He agreed with King Augustus of Poland to hire fifty thousand German mercenaries, and to send fifty thousand of his Russians to Poland to be trained.

Charles as usual faced the danger-point. Early in the spring, he marched south to Riga.

King Augustus's Saxon troops, commanded by Marshal Stenau, were ready to oppose his crossing of the River Dwina, which is very wide at that point.

It looked as if the odds were much against the attack-

ing party under such conditions. The Swedish King, however, constructed large boats with high, movable sides, which protected those within and could be lowered to form a landing-bridge.

Then when he was ready, on a day when the wind blew strong from the north, he had built a huge pile of wet straw and fired it. The dense smoke blew over the river. In the midst of this artificial fog, increased by boats containing more smoking straw, he started his transports across, he himself taking his customary place in the lead.

In fifteen minutes the force was at the opposite side, the only mishap being to the King's pride, when three men got to shore before him. Landing his cannon, he at once began to order his line of battle.

Before he was ready, however, the wind blew the smoke away sufficiently for the Saxons to see what their enemy was about; and taking a leaf from Charles's own book, Marshal Stenau charged him furiously with his cavalry.

The unprepared Swedes were thrown into disorder and driven back to the river. Their intrepid leader rallied them, reformed his line partly in the water, and advanced steadily. There was a fierce fight, for Stenau was brave and capable. But on equal terms there were few troops which could stand against the Lion and his disciplined veterans: the Saxons gave way, at length, and retreated.

Charles hastened on, capturing all Courland and Lithuania, while King Augustus intrigued with the various factions into which Poland was hopelessly divided. He even tried to negotiate secretly with Charles through the beautiful Countess of Königs-marck. The implacable Swede advanced relentlessly.

When he took Warsaw, Augustus could not refuse to let an embassy wait upon him.

"I will never grant the Poles peace till they have elected another King," declared the conqueror.

Augustus saw his only hope lay in fighting. He gathered all his forces and prepared for a supreme effort. The two faced each other between Warsaw and Cracow, and the headlong charge of the Swedish King once more brought him complete victory, though he had only a little more than half the other's numbers.

Following up the defeated Augustus, he took Cracow almost without resistance, himself snatching the match from one gunner who was preparing to fire a cannon. Had it not been for a fall of his horse, which broke his thigh, he would probably have captured his enemy then and there.

This accident gave his foes another chance. The Poles still hesitated to dethrone their King. The Saxon army gathered again. In one of his irresistible dashes, he routed it at Pultask, whereat Augustus fell back into Saxony. Charles captured Thorn and Elbing. The whole country was in awe of him. His friends urged him to seize the Polish crown himself, since he was the real ruler. The King held to his plan, and finally the Diet, rent by political parties, obeyed his will and elected Stanislas Leczinski King in place of the deposed Augustus.

Charles's real business in life was fighting, so he immediately set out to conquer the rest of Poland. He took the strong city of Leopold in one day, captured vast treasure, and presently drove Augustus once more out of Warsaw, which he had recaptured.

All this time the King was exposing himself with the utmost recklessness, swimming rivers, leading charges,

living the hard life of a campaigning soldier. His invariable dress was a coarse blue coat with brass buttons; a piece of black taffeta served him for a cravat; he remarked once that he had not had his jack-boots off for six years, save when he went to bed. His only complaint was that his enemies had come to run away too soon: it had become more like hunting than fighting!

Fortune seemed ever to charge with him in his impetuous onsets. He drove back one hundred thousand Russians who had come to King Augustus's aid. He conquered the latter so completely that he finally forced him in the treaty of peace to publicly renounce the throne and to write a letter of congratulation to his successor Stanislas. He crossed the Oder into Saxony, against the solemn warning of the Imperial Diet; he levied heavy contributions, and received at his camp ambassadors from nearly all the princes of Europe, each seeking his influence in some scheme or quarrel; he publicly humiliated the Emperor and made him grant religious freedom to the Protestants of Silesia.

When Emperor Joseph was reproached by the Pope's nuncio for thus giving way to heretics, he smiled and answered:

"It is very lucky for you that the King of Sweden did not propose that I should turn Protestant, for had he done so, I do not know what I might have done."

There is hardly a case in history of the attainment of such dominance by the ruler of so relatively small a nation. This northern conqueror, unknown or scorned a few years previously, warned Rome that before long she might see him nearer at hand. He had ideas of sweeping on to Persia, Turkey, and Egypt. Alexander's dream of conquering the world began to seem a possi-

bility. All the while he was rising at four o'clock, dressing unaided, spending a quarter of an hour at the table, drinking no wine, exercising his soldiers daily.

The persistent Russians claimed his first attention. They were continually harassing the eastern borders. Charles allowed himself a year in which to dethrone the Czar.

In September, 1707, at the height of his renown, he set out. He had with him a rich, splendidly armed and equipped force of forty-three thousand men. Count Levenhaupt waited for him in Poland with twenty thousand more. A third force of fifteen thousand was in Finland. Fresh recruits were coming from Sweden. He seemed irresistible. The Sublime Porte of Turkey, the inveterate enemy of Russia, sent him an embassy and suggestions of friendly alliance.

The Czar had advanced far into Poland, but was at this time at Grodno. Charles was following his habit of distancing his main force, and arrived within six miles of Grodno accompanied by only six hundred guards. Peter at once evacuated the town with two thousand men; but learning presently the smallness of his enemy's numbers, and that the rest were fifteen miles behind, he despatched a body of fifteen thousand cavalry for a surprise attack.

They entered the town in the dusk undiscovered, reaching the first guard of thirty men. The alarm was given. For seven minutes, this heroic thirty sustained the attack of an army. Then Charles dashed up with the rest of his six hundred, and his mere arrival threw the Russians into a panic.

The King pursued them, joined by his army, regardless of the midwinter cold, the marsh and forest, the lack of provisions, the destroyed roads and bridges.

It was six months before he finally came up with them at Hollosin, intrenched behind a marsh and river.

Without waiting for the main body of his infantry, Charles led his foot-guards straightforward, sending the cavalry around to flank the enemy.

Dashing into the stream, the King crossed the river, the water up to his shoulders. He did not pause an instant, but floundered across the marsh, his men following in that blind confidence he always inspired. They fell furiously upon the surprised Russians, who had supposed their natural defenses sufficient.

The conflict that followed was one of the most notable of Charles's career. Seeming to bear a charmed life, he was always in the thickest of the fray. He fought on foot till the cavalry arrived from its détour; then he mounted: but noticing that a young nobleman, of whom he was fond, was wounded, he made him take his charger, and continued to command on foot.

Nothing could resist him that day, and while the Russians fought far better than they had done in the former campaigns, they were finally routed and forced to retire beyond the Borysthenes into their own country.

Charles pursued them hotly. Czar Peter, great man as he was, began to fear for the country he was bringing up from semibarbarism. He sent proposals of peace.

"I will treat with the Czar at Moscow," was Charles's haughty answer.

He pushed on, routing a force of Kalmuks at Smolensk and almost losing his life in the engagement. Refusing to wait for the reinforcements behind, he turned off from the Moscow road into Ukrania, where he expected to make an alliance with the Prince Mazeppa (the same Mazeppa of whose terrific ride, tied to the back of a wild horse, Byron wrote).

Instead of joining an army of thirty thousand, with ammunition and provisions, he found Mazeppa a defeated fugitive, the Russians having annihilated his power. Far worse, General Levenhaupt finally appeared with five thousand men—all that was left of his army after a series of tremendous battles with fifty thousand Russians, who had captured his cannon and supplies.

A frightfully cold winter followed. Half-fed and half-clad, the Swedes suffered intensely. It is declared that two thousand died of cold on one march. Only the leader kept up his courage.

A soldier ventured to show him publicly a piece of black and mouldy bread, made of oats and barley, which was about their only food.

Charles took it, ate it calmly, and remarked:

“It is not good, but one can eat it.”

In the face of such spirit the men could only follow him.

By spring his army had dwindled to eighteen thousand. Still he thought only of his resolve to conquer Russia, and laid siege to Pultawa, a storehouse from which he counted on supplying his force with all necessities.

The large garrison resisted all attack. The Czar was hurrying up with reinforcements. In a skirmish, Charles received a ball which shattered his heel-bone. For six hours he sat his horse and directed the fight. When some one discovered his hurt, he was in such pain that he had to be lifted from his horse and carried to the tent. The surgeons decided the leg must be cut off. One, however, thought he could save it by deep incisions.

The King bore the agony of the surgery unmoved.

As soon as it was done, he gave orders for an attack in the morning. Despite all protests, he headed the infantry in his litter.

The first charge broke the Russians. Victory seemed sure. But General Creuts, who had been ordered to flank the enemy with the cavalry, lost his way. The Czar had time to rally his men. Their cannon killed the horses of the King's litter. He had two more harnessed. Another volley struck the litter and threw the King out.

The report flew about that he was killed. The Swedes fell back. Their powder gave out. The Russians profited by their confusion so well that when the battle was over half the Swedes were killed or captured, all the supplies and treasure were lost, and Charles's life was only saved by his being carried forcibly off the field. Most of the remainder of the famous army was captured a little later, and the wounded King, with a few hundred followers, made his way into Turkey.

It would take a long time to tell of his five years' stay there; of his efforts to destroy the Czar through the Turks; of the Homeric battle between his three hundred guards and a Turkish army of eight thousand; of his return to Sweden, to find that his many enemies had lopped off most of his conquests and inheritances outside of Sweden itself; of his famous defense of Stralsburg, where he performed feats enough for the lifetime of an ordinary man; of his characteristic invasion of Norway just when his fortunes seemed at the lowest ebb, and his actual reaching of the Norwegian capital.

The last scene comes in the winter of 1718. He was making a second attempt on Norway, and laid siege to Fredericshall in December. The cold was so intense that sentinels fell dead at their posts. Charles, hard-

ened by sixteen years' exposure, endured everything, sleeping in the open on boards or straw, encouraging his men to the assault.

On December 11, as he stood in the trenches at night, directing the workers who were breaking the frozen ground by starlight, a discharge of grape-shot from the fortress killed him instantly. In dying, he laid his hand on his sword, and the witnesses who ran up found him lying in that posture.

Thus ended the career of one of the most extraordinary soldiers in all history.

By a strange coincidence, between the time the above narrative was written and when it was put into type, in September, 1917, the newspapers announced that the body of King Charles XII had been taken from its coffin in the ancient Knights' Church at Stockholm, where it had reposed in peace nearly two hundred years—that a commission of scientists might determine whether the fatal shot was fired from the enemy's camp or by a traitor in his own army!

After minutely describing the wound, and declaring that the indications were that the bullet came from the hostile direction, the account says:

"Those who viewed the dead King were struck by his masterful countenance still bearing through all the years the look of a leader of men."

CHAPTER XX

CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

It was the late afternoon of June 22, 1876. The valley of the little Rosebud River in southern Montana, then an almost unknown wilderness, was filled with the dust rising from a mob of soldiers, horses, and mules in the first confusion of making camp. The 7th U. S. Cavalry had cut loose from their comrades on the Yellowstone River, twelve miles away, a few hours before; they had marched out in columns of fours to the stirring strains of "Garry Owen"; and the seven hundred troopers, with their heavily loaded horses and a pack-train of one hundred and thirty mules, were now engaged in "finding themselves" on the first halt of this expedition into the Indian country.

The officers' call sounded from the commander's tent. Presently a little group of men was gathered there for a conference.

This leader, Lieutenant-Colonel George A. Custer, was a striking figure. Tall, erect, dashing, handsome, with long yellow curls, and fond of wearing a conspicuous jacket of black velvet and gold, "Old Curly" had always been the idol of his men. He had become a major-general at the age of twenty-four in the Civil War; he had made a whirlwind success with his cavalry division; for years now he had built and tested and led this 7th Cavalry Regiment in constant fighting with the Indians, until he and they had a reputation

second to none in this peculiar and trying kind of warfare. Of extraordinary strength and endurance, and recklessly brave, a headlong dash against the enemy was ordinarily what he seemed to live for.

But on this occasion his situation was unusual, and his troop commanders could not fail to see at a glance that he was strained and unlike his usual confident self.

He had just returned from Washington, where his failure to produce legal evidence of his charges against the secretary of war had left him in disgrace with his superiors. Only his magnificent reputation in the field and his peculiar value had given him a place at all in this expedition against the Sioux. As it was, he was under the command of General Terry, instead of having charge of the column from Fort Lincoln which was to co-operate with Crook's force from the south and Gibbon from the west; and this change from the independent command he had so long enjoyed was a severe strain on him.

For this campaign was of exceptional importance. There had been constant trouble with the Sioux ever since the treaty of 1868, which gave them this great territory of one hundred thousand square miles in what is now Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming. The almost impassable stretches of the "Bad Lands" and the wild region of the Black Hills were no longer a protection when gold was discovered. Miners and settlers crowded in; the Northern Pacific Railroad began to survey for a route across the region. The Indians, with good reason, considered that their land was being taken from them. Murders and outbreaks followed in swift succession.

Finally the government decided that all the Northwest Indians must confine themselves to definite res-

ervations. This set the tribes ablaze. A great force gathered together under the famous Sitting Bull, Gall, Crazy Horse, and Rain-in-the-Face—who had escaped after being boldly arrested for a murder by Captain Tom Custer, the general's brother.

There were supposed to be from one thousand to fifteen hundred of them on the war-path. The three columns already mentioned, each with more than one thousand men, were to strike in from different sides and end the dangerous uprising.

Custer had been despatched to follow a westward Indian trail up the river, discovered by one of his officers, Major Reno. General Terry supposed he would thus cut the Indians off from the east, and Custer would be ready to attack when Gibbon penetrated the country from the north, about the 26th. The latter's last words that noon had been:

"Now, Custer, don't be greedy, but wait for us."

Opinions differ greatly as to the amount of freedom given him by Terry's orders. It seems fairly certain, however, that he was making up his mind to wipe out his official censure by some brilliant success on his own responsibility.

Ordinarily Custer said nothing of his plans till the time came for action. His officers were surprised, therefore, at this first conference, to hear him begin to explain matters. He announced that he had declined Terry's offer of a battalion of the 2d Cavalry and a detachment of gatling-guns; he wished to be free to move rapidly, and thought his own regiment sufficient. He showed clearly that he meant to strike the Indian trail and then "go for" them. There were to be no more bugle-calls; the march was to be silent and rapid as possible, beginning at five in the morning; each troop

commander was to be responsible for everything except starting and going into camp.

As the officers left, they commented on their commander's unusual depression.

"I believe Custer is going to be killed," said one. "I never heard him talk so seriously about a coming fight."

Next morning the regiment started south. Twelve hours of hard marching carried them thirty-three miles through the difficulties of these broken-up, discouraging "Bad Lands." On the 24th they made twenty-eight miles over an even worse country.

Signs of the Indians were plain: large numbers had evidently passed toward a rendezvous to the westward. All fires were put out after supper, and the men got some sleep while scouts and officers studied the trail. Finding that the enemy had gone across the divide between the Rosebud and the Little Big Horn, the column set out shortly before midnight and toiled up the hills till two o'clock, advancing about ten miles.

Unsaddling to rest the tired horses, they halted here. But when the scouts returned, about eight in the morning, and reported that the Indian camp was in the valley of the Little Big Horn, the march was resumed till half past ten.

They were now about sixteen miles from the valley, with an exceedingly rough country ahead, cut up by deep gulches.

Concealing his force in a ravine, Custer went forward with the scouts to reconnoitre.

The smoke of the camp-fires was plainly visible from the hilltop. The sight brought back all the swift decision which had carried the leader to so many dashing victories. He decided to surprise the Indians by an attack at daybreak next morning.

But he did not know that a portion of the great camp was cut off from his view by an intervening bluff: instead of one thousand to fifteen hundred warriors, there were probably twice that many ahead of him. And on his return he found that the Indians had discovered his approach. A box of biscuit had been dropped from the pack-train; sending back for it, an Indian had been seen trying to break it open. Beyond a doubt, the village was warned.

The only effect of this, serious as it was, was to cause Custer to attack at once instead of waiting. His one fear seemed to be that the Indians might escape, as they so often had done. All doubts about orders or anything else had vanished. There was stiff work ahead, of the sort he knew and delighted in. He grasped the opportunity for which he had evidently hoped and planned.

He adopted on a small scale the plan of the whole campaign. Major Reno with three troops was sent to attack the village from the south; Captain Benteen and a similar detachment was to swing across the valley and fall upon them from the west; while Custer himself planned to sweep down on the northern end of the encampment.

It was good strategy, which had often before succeeded.

But its success depended entirely on one of the sudden confident dashes which nearly always threw the loosely organized Indian forces into a panic.

Reno failed completely. He crossed the river, threw out skirmishers, and started down the valley. But so slow and hesitating was his advance that the enemy recovered from their first disorder. Reinforcements were rushed back from the other camps, and

Reno's one hundred and fifty troopers were hotly assailed by an increasing force.

His Arikaree scouts, on the left of the line, gave way immediately—and did not stop running till they reached the Powder River. Breaking through this gap, the Sioux threw the whole line back into the timber by the river. Instead of boldly charging, or even holding his position, Reno presently retreated.

Hotly pursued, he managed to recross the river and take up a position on the bluffs, losing a fifth of his command in the dangerous movement.

During the retreat, Lieutenant Hodgson was wounded and fell into the river. Sergeant Criswell dashed to him and dragged him across, clinging to a stirrup. As they reached the bank, another bullet killed Hodgson. Criswell rallied his men, then coolly rode back and brought off the body, with the ammunition from several fallen horses—untouched by the rain of bullets. He received a medal of honor for his exploit.

Benteen had found almost impossible country and no Indians. Turning to the right he swung down the valley.

He met a trooper with a message from Custer, ordering him to come on quickly and bring the spare ammunition. Exhausted as the horses were, by the heat and the terrible travelling, he set out at a gallop. Through the clouds of dust and smoke, he presently made out Reno's force on the bluff. There was plainly a big fight also farther down the valley; but a Crow scout galloped by pointing to the bluff, and Benteen joined Reno, who was still being assailed. Little as he suspected it, this sealed Custer's fate.

Major Reno was, of course, the superior officer. Hour after hour the force waited there, suffering greatly

from the enemy's fire and from lack of water. They could hear the sounds of battle to the north. Late in the afternoon two heavy volleys brought an evident signal from Custer.

Reno did nothing. The force would have been annihilated but for a desperate charge by Benteen, to which the commander reluctantly assented. Nineteen heroic volunteers brought up a scanty supply of water from the river in the face of heavy fire. After a terrible experience, with many individual acts of bravery, the attack died away in the afternoon and they saw the Indians moving off.

Meanwhile what had become of Custer?

After separating from Reno, he led his force northward as rapidly as the difficult ascent permitted. He was ablaze with eagerness, dashing ahead from time to time, and then reining up for the column.

From one pinnacle, he had a glimpse of the valley, and waved his hat to Reno in the distance.

Galloping back, he called to the captain in the lead:

"Keogh, those Indians are running. If we can keep them at it, we can afford to sacrifice half the horses in the command."

Keogh glanced back at the veterans who had been with them in many a "hot corner."

"General, we'll do all that man and horse can do."

The bugles sounded the charge. The troopers clattered forward, down toward the river, looking for a spot where they could descend to the valley. Several attempts proved fruitless. Realizing probably for the first time the numbers opposed to him, Custer sent back a message to Reno and also to Benteen.

About half past two in the afternoon, Custer turned down toward the river.

The Indians had seen him, however; and their easy repulse of Reno enabled them to mass most of their force against him. With shrewd generalship they made use of deep ravines on each side of the advancing column. Before Custer reached the river, he found himself suddenly attacked in front and on both flanks by a force several times as large as his own.

The assault was transformed into a defense. The men dismounted, the horses were sent to the rear, and with cool courage Custer met these new and unexpected conditions.

Doubtless he still expected that Reno and Benteen would come to his assistance. In any case, he and his little band immortalized themselves by their resolute and telling struggle.

The Indians had better guns. They galloped along the line pouring in a destructive fire. The soldiers answered steadily, making each shot count, undaunted by numbers, by death, wounds and thirst, by carbines in which the cartridges jammed and had to be picked out by knives, by the stampede of one group of horses after another, carrying with them the priceless reserve of ammunition.

The hours passed. Through the smoke and dust and scorching heat they fought on, an ever-lessening band, yet with no sign of faltering.

At last the ammunition ran low. The Indians realized the situation only too well. From three sides they charged upon the pitiful remnant.

Overwhelmed by numbers, Custer and his men went down fighting to the last. A few individuals had made futile efforts to break through. But "the bulk of the command was found just where it had fought, with the troopers in line, their officers in position! They had



Custer found himself suddenly attacked in front and on both flanks

been beaten and killed. Not an officer or man lived to tell the story, but they had not been disgraced."

So died George A. Custer, at the age of thirty-seven—a fitting ending for one of the most romantically brave and dashing officers of the American cavalry.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CAPTURE OF QUEBEC

"MY utmost desire and ambition is to look steadily upon danger."

Thus wrote James Wolfe once to his mother. And he had his desire many times. His first attempt at soldiering, when he was only thirteen years old, was cut short by sickness; but in 1742, when he was fifteen, he was an ensign in the 12th Foot in Flanders. At Dettingen his regiment took the brunt of the attack; the boy of sixteen found himself a lieutenant for his share in that. Two years later he was a major at Culloden, where his regiment lost a third of its men. In 1747 he was wounded at Laeffelt and personally thanked for his services by the Duke of Cumberland. His zeal in the blundering expedition against Rochefort caused the King to make him brevet-colonel. And in the trying landing at Louisburg, in 1758, his tall, thin figure stood erect in the bow of his boat, amid a heavy French fire, directing the dash through the pounding surf to the shore.

So he had looked steadily on danger over and over before that capture of Quebec which was the high point of his life.

When Wolfe was appointed in 1759 to lead this supreme effort against the French power in Canada, one of King George's ministers remonstrated, saying the man was mad.

"Mad, is he?" retorted his Majesty. "Then I hope he'll bite some others of my generals."

In fact, the young officer's military reputation was admirable; he had made his regiment a model, and strict disciplinarian as he was, his officers and men worshipped him; his system of manœuvres remained in use long after his death; and his personal courage had been repeatedly manifested.

He was tall and slender, with red hair; solitary, given at times to gloomy musings, and suffering from ill health, he was nevertheless impetuous and easily aroused; and his insatiable ambition for glory ever drove him forward.

He had hoped at this time to rest a while and to be married to the beautiful Miss Lowther (as every reader of Thackeray's "The Virginians" will recall); but though he confidently expected the ocean voyage would break down his health, he had always made it a rule to accept service whenever offered; so in February, 1759, he set sail in command of nine thousand soldiers, with a fleet of twenty-two sail co-operating under Admiral Saunders.

On the 27th of June the young commander had the first sight of the task ahead of him. He stood on a bluff at the north end of the Island of Orleans, three hundred miles up from the mouth of the river. Behind him, anchored beside this long island, lay the fleet. Before him rose the mighty fortress which French experts had boasted to be impregnable.

The river narrowed just above the island to half its former width; here, dominating both shores, the great rock thrust itself defiantly forward. It was over three hundred and thirty feet high, and well fortified. On its sides and at its base lay the town. But the French had not trusted to town and citadel: they had made one great fortress of the whole eight-mile stretch along the

north shore. Protected by the Montmorency River, and its falls on the east, and the lofty plateau on the west, this strong shore was defended by a line of redoubts. Everywhere were batteries and camps. There was an intrenched army to defeat before an invader could get at Quebec at all from this eastern quarter. Montcalm, the French commander, was a skilful veteran, with eleven thousand troops manning these defenses. And Wolfe was assured that the cliffs which lined the river west of the town were unscalable, except at a few easily defended points, so there seemed no chance of gaining this plateau which dominated the city.

His whole plan of campaign must be revised. He felt confident too that he could not hope for Lord Amherst's arrival, with his twelve thousand men, from the Montreal side in time to serve. It was a mighty responsibility.

His thoughts must have been gloomy as he returned to his vessel; and they were not brightened when a sudden terrific storm that night threw the fleet into disorder and wrecked many transports and boats.

However, he hoped to get Montcalm to fight and felt sure of the result on anything like equal terms.

The following weeks brought a series of disappointments. Wolfe occupied Point Levis and bombarded the town of Quebec, but this could have little effect on the final issue. Two attempts by the French to drift down on the fleet with fire-ships came to nothing; but an English attack at Montmorency east of the city was repulsed with heavy loss; and word came that Amherst's force was still at Crown Point and could not arrive before cold weather would drive the fleet down the river.

Wolfe's tireless activity had led him to every sort of exposure. For weeks he was never undressed. He fretted over the passing of the precious weeks with nothing accomplished. Presently he went down with fever.

A council of war was held, and it was decided that the best chance lay in a blow somewhere to the westward of the town.

Wolfe's main anxiety was lest he might not be able to lead this in person.

"I know that you cannot cure me," said he to his physician, "but if you can fix me up so that I will not suffer pain for two or three days and can do my duty—that is all I ask."

To the joy of the French, who thought the siege was being raised, the English began retiring from the Montmorency heights at the beginning of September. They concentrated at Point Levis, and with each favorable wind more ships moved up above the city.

That a new blow was impending was evident; but Montcalm could hardly learn the point threatened, for the English leader did not know this himself.

As late as September 8, Wolfe, pale and weak from his illness, sat in his cabin on the *Sutherland*, and wrote home that he had about three thousand six hundred troops waiting to attack when and where they best could. "My constitution is utterly ruined, without the consolation of having done any considerable service to the state, or without any prospect of it."

Yet, gloomy as he might be, he was still searching for the most hopeful point of attack. As he had once said of another man: "Don't talk to me of constitution: he had good spirit and that will carry a man through everything."

He had repeatedly explored the whole shore for miles west of Quebec, but on the 10th, he examined with a telescope from the south shore a spot pointed out to him by Major Stobo, who had been a captive in Quebec and had recently escaped.

Here he could see a small cave; a stream, St. Denis brook, tumbling down the face of the cliff, a path slanting upward; and a cluster of a dozen tents at the top with no movement near them.

Clearly the post was not well guarded. With good luck, a night attack might get past—and once on the Plains of Abraham, as the plateau was called, he felt he could inevitably master Quebec sooner or later.

The plan was hazardous. A handful of men at the top of this breakneck path could hold it against an army.

But Wolfe had learned that Vergor, who was in charge of these French outposts, was worthless as a soldier. He resolved to make the attempt.

The night of the 12th was set for the enterprise. Wolfe had three thousand six hundred men aboard the ships, and one thousand two hundred more were ordered to march along the south shore after nightfall, ready for re-embarking.

For days the vessels had drifted up and down with the tide keeping the Frenchmen ever uncertain as to where the next attempt at landing might be made. To add to this, those below Quebec now made a feint of attacking on the Beauport shore, completely deceiving Montcalm, who thought the real effort would be there.

So anxious was Wolfe to keep his plan a secret, that his own brigadiers did not know on the day beforehand just where he purposed to land.

He had learned from deserters that provision-boats were to drop down the river to Quebec that night. He did not know that the order had been countermanded, but that by a miracle of good luck for him the sentries knew of the instructions but not the change.

A number of large bateaux and other boats had been gathered together, capable of holding about one thousand seven hundred men.

The general had issued his final orders to his troops, reminding them that a vigorous blow now might decide the fate of Canada, ordering the battalions to form speedily when they reached the summit and drive off the enemy till all were in place. "The officers and men will remember what their country expects of them," it said.

In his cabin on the *Sutherland* Wolfe gave his friend Jervis his will and a miniature of his betrothed, Miss Lowther, which he carried on his breast. If he fell, it was to go back to her.

At midnight a lantern at the flag-ship's maintop gave the signal. The troops in the first division embarked quietly in the flat-bottomed boats. Toward two in the morning the little flotilla cast loose, Wolfe in the stern of a heavily loaded craft in the van. With tide and wind favoring them, they swept slowly and noiselessly down-stream in the darkness, using the oars only for steering.

It was a solemn moment for James Wolfe. Whatever others thought of his achievements thus far, they were far below his ambitious dreams. Now, at least, it looked as if the chance to make himself a place in history might lie ahead there in the blackness.

There was no moon, and a September mist obscured the stars. Only the ripple of the water against the

boat and the sighing of the southwest breeze through the trees on shore came to the ears of the little party.

The leader's mind went back to England and those he loved there. His physical sufferings made him wonder if he should ever again see his betrothed, or the mother to whom he had been so devoted.

His musings found natural expression in some stanzas of one of his favorite poems, Gray's "Elegy." In a low voice he repeated:

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

The little group about him was silent.

"Gentlemen," said Wolfe with animation, "I would rather have written that poem than take Quebec."

He had hardly finished when the hulk of an English vessel loomed up ahead in the channel. It was the *Hunter* waiting to intercept the French provision-boats. As they drew near, Wolfe's trained ear caught sounds he recognized only too well: thinking this was the enemy, the *Hunter* was bringing its guns to bear on his boat. In another moment they would have fired. But the leader hailed them cautiously and the expedition swept past in safety.

They neared the spot which had been marked. The beach here by the *Anse du Foulon* (Fuller's Cave—now Wolfe's Cave) was patrolled by French sentries.

Presently a challenge rang out from the shore:

"*Qui vive ?*"

"*La France,*" called back an officer who luckily spoke excellent French.

"*À quel régiment ?*" demanded the sentry.

"*De la Reine*," answered the Highlander. "We are the provision-boats," he continued. "But hush, we may be heard by the enemy's ship yonder."

The unsuspecting sentinel let them pass.

A few minutes later the commander's boat scraped on the sand. He was the first to leap ashore. In a moment there were grouped about him twenty-four officers who had volunteered to lead the way up the path.

Wolfe looked upward at the precipice rising into obscurity. It was four o'clock. They had but a short while before dawn. The narrow zigzag path up the heights was, as he knew, obstructed by rocks and trees. It was difficult enough even when cleared and by daylight. He turned and saw the men disembarking from the other boats, some of which had gone too far.

"You must get up as you can, my lads."

Strapping their muskets to their backs, the volunteers began their perilous climb, pulling themselves up by trees and bushes and points of rock. Three Light Infantry companies followed.

As they neared the top, a sentry challenged them.

Captain Macdonald began to answer in French. But the impatient volunteers threw themselves forward, gaining the summit in one breathless dash.

The sentry fired. Vergor, the French commander at the spot, was asleep. He ran out. But he had only thirty men, having allowed the rest to go away to gather their crops. The volunteers rushed upon them, and some of the Light Infantry appeared behind these. Losing heart, the Frenchmen ran. Vergor got a ball in the heel. One man was captured.

In the keenest anxiety, Wolfe waited below with the rest of his one thousand six hundred troops. Suddenly

he heard a few shots, followed almost immediately by English cheers.

He gave the word. Headed by their general, the men swarmed up the cliff, up the path—any way they could. In an incredibly short time Wolfe had this advance force drawn up to protect the head of the path.

Day was just breaking. Spurred on by his fiery ardor, the movement was hurried through as he had planned. The other detachments were ferried over and brought up the cleared path in double file. With the greatest effort, one gun was dragged to the summit.

As the sun appeared over the eastern hills, its level rays fell upon a force of four thousand eight hundred Englishmen, drawn up in battle array on the heights.

Before them stretched the undulating, tree-dotted Plains of Abraham, level with the highest part of Quebec. They were only a mile from the town. Not an enemy was in sight. By the most amazing combination of chances, the venturesome attempt had succeeded. The surprise had been complete. The only loss had been a handful of men killed by a volley from a French battery at Samos, above the landing-place.

Montcalm was at his headquarters far to the east of Quebec. He had been up all night expecting an assault.

When the sound of the guns at Samos was heard, he exclaimed to his secretary that it meant disaster to the convoy of provisions so greatly needed.

While they were discussing this, a breathless soldier burst in. He declared he was the only survivor of Vergor's post, and that the English held the heights.

It seemed so incredible that Montcalm did not even send for further information. An hour or more later a courier brought word that there really were English on the heights. Hastening detachments thither, Mont-

calm rode swiftly to the Governor's quarters in the city. He looked across the table-land. There he saw not a raiding detachment as he had supposed, but the whole British army. It was as if that menacing "thin red line" had appeared by magic in this unexpected quarter.

"I see them," said the Marquis to his excited companions. "I see them where they ought not to be. This, my friends, is a serious business."

He was urged to delay and bring up reinforcements. But the intrepid old warrior refused. "We cannot avoid the issue," said he. "The enemy is intrenching and already has cannon. If we give him time to make his position good we can never attack him. We must crush them before midday," was his decision. He sent forward one thousand five hundred militia to harass the English by sharpshooting while he gathered his forces.

The sharpshooters soon laid so many of Wolfe's men low, that he had them driven back by bayonet charges, but the English had not yet fired a shot. Wolfe "seemed to be in all parts of the field at once," holding his men to strict order, cheering them in this trying situation, waiting coolly for the real attack he was expecting.

He saw a captain fall, badly wounded. Bending over him, he told him not to give up hope, and promised him promotion for his gallantry. And, at this crisis, he actually sent a message to General Monckton to carry out these instructions in case he himself fell in action. (The captain survived—and got his promotion.)

At eight o'clock the English commander saw the heads of the French columns skirting the ramparts beyond the plateau. He gave a sigh of relief. Here

was what he had been waiting for. Calmly he ordered his men to lie down and rest.

The French advanced in three divisions, numbering about seven thousand five hundred men, with parties of Indians. In the middle came the regulars led by the veteran Montcalm on a black charger.

Facing this division stood Wolfe, watching the enemy like a wrestler about to close. Seeing an attempt to outflank his left, he reformed this to meet the danger.

At nine o'clock the French were in line. Wolfe waved his sword. His men behind him sprang to their feet. Six hundred yards apart the two armies faced each other. On the issue of the next hour depended the destiny of half the North American continent. Montcalm rode up and down his line, animating his men.

At five minutes past ten the French charged, with flags flying and "uttering their war-cry in the old-time fashion."

Wolfe had ordered his men not to return a shot till the foe was within forty yards. The ground directly in front of his lines descended into an uneven hollow and he saw the advantage he would have at close range.

The sun had come out from behind the clouds. Its brilliance lit up the scarlet uniforms of the English, the gay tartans of the Highlanders. They made ideal marks for the French, who began firing when they were within two hundred yards.

The British lines, drawn up as if on parade, received the volley in grim silence. The only motion was the closing up of ranks when a man fell.

A ball struck Wolfe in the wrist, severing the tendons. The pain was agonizing. He tied a handkerchief about

it, and walked calmly up and down in front of his line, exhorting his men to stand firm and await the word.

At last the French were ascending the broken slope, barely forty yards away.

"Present—fire!" rang out the command.

A simultaneous discharge followed, like the report of a cannon—"one of the most tremendous and effective volleys that had ever been delivered since the invention of gunpowder."

As the smoke cleared slightly, a great gap in the French ranks and heaps of dead and wounded showed what frightful execution had been done. The British reloaded and fired again, and again. In fifteen minutes there were more gaps than ranks in the enemy's line. Montcalm galloped to and fro striving to rally his men.

Wolfe saw the moment had come. His tall figure in a bright new uniform was most conspicuous as he placed himself at the head of his grenadiers and gave the order to charge.

In the very act of waving his sword for the advance he was struck a second time. It was a dangerous wound, but he had often said that "while a man is able to do his duty, and to stand and hold his arms, it is infamous to retire"; and he lived up to his maxim.

Calling to his aroused men, he pressed forward, and the whole force dashed upon the enemy at a run.

A third ball struck Wolfe in the chest. He staggered on, trying to keep pace with his comrades. But after a few steps he reeled. The charge swept past him.

"Support me," he gasped to a lieutenant beside him. "Don't let our brave fellows see me fall. The day is ours—keep it."

As he spoke, he sank to the ground.

The lieutenant and three others lifted him and carried him a little toward the rear. The grenadiers had gone on; they did not even know their leader was struck.

The anxious bearers rested their burden against a small redoubt. One proposed to go for a surgeon.

"It is useless," murmured Wolfe. "It is all over with me."

For a few seconds there was silence. They feared he was already gone.

Suddenly a messenger close by called out: "They run—they run!"

The words seemed to electrify the dying general. He started up.

"Who run?" he asked, with the air of a man just waking.

"The enemy, sir," was the reply. "They give way everywhere."

"Run quickly to Colonel Burton," commanded Wolfe. "Tell him to march Webb's regiment down to the St. Charles and cut off the retreat to the bridge."

The effort had exhausted his strength. Turning over on his side, he murmured:

"Now God be praised, I die happy."

The brave Montcalm, too, had received a mortal wound. "I am glad of it," said he. "I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec."

He died the following day. Four days later the keys of Quebec were delivered to the British commander. Small as the engagement was, in its results it was one of the great battles of the world.

Wolfe's remains were borne home in state and

England mourned her hero who had given her a new empire.

This inscription stands in marble in Westminster Abbey:

TO THE MEMORY OF

JAMES WOLFE

MAJOR-GENERAL AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

OF THE BRITISH LAND FORCES

ON AN EXPEDITION AGAINST QUEBEC,

WHO, AFTER SURMOUNTING BY ABILITY AND VALOUR

ALL OBSTACLES OF ART AND NATURE

WAS SLAIN, IN THE MOMENT OF VICTORY

ON THE XIII OF SEPTEMBER, MDCCLIX.,

THE KING AND PARLIAMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN

DEDICATE THIS MONUMENT.

CHAPTER XXII

HOW "MAD ANTHONY" TOOK STONY POINT

IN 1779 the British held New York, with a force several times as great as that under Washington in New Jersey. Sir Henry Clinton sailed up the Hudson in May, and easily captured the fortifications which had been started by the Americans to guard the ferry from Stony Point, on the west shore, to Verplanck's.

Having strengthened and garrisoned these strategic points, he tried to draw Washington to the east of the Hudson by a descent on the Connecticut shore. But the American general decided that a better answer to this feint would be the recapture of Stony Point.

For this difficult attempt he selected General Wayne, who had already won his nickname of "Mad Anthony" by his personal gallantry, but who had also made a reputation in the past three years as an able commander.

"Where Wayne went, there was a fight always; that was his business."

This was a task which demanded a fighting leader. Stony Point was a rugged promontory of a hundred acres, jutting far out into the river and rising one hundred and forty feet into the air, steep on all sides, but especially precipitous toward the land. A swamp turned it practically into an island, with one causeway crossing from the mainland; but at low tide there was a narrow beach at each end of this march.

The British had been working "like a Parsel of Devils" in strengthening this natural fortress, which

they called "Little Gibraltar." They had garrisoned it with six hundred men, and thrown up fourteen lines of breastworks, commanding every possible line of attack; half-way down the hill were two rows of great trees, felled with their branches pointing downward, to form a double abatis; and batteries of twenty-one guns, including a ten-inch mortar and two twenty-four-pounders, frowned above these obstacles. In addition, several war-vessels lay in the river, their guns commanding much of the lower ground.

Indeed, when Wayne studied this stronghold from the heights of the Donderberg, between it and his camp at Fort Montgomery, he wrote to Washington that its capture by storm did not seem practicable. But he added: "Whenever you may order it, I will attempt the surprise."

In a conference on July 10, he expressed this more strongly, according to Irving. "General," he exclaimed, "if *you* will plan it, I'll storm hell."

It was decided to make the attempt on the night of July 15. Wayne took every precaution to keep his plans from the enemy: his patrols killed every dog within three miles of the point, lest some barking cur should give the alarm; and no communication with the fort was allowed, "Widow Calhoun and another widow going to the enemy with chickens and greens" being arrested by one party.

On the morning of the appointed day the Light Infantry, one thousand three hundred and fifty strong, were drawn up on parade at Fort Montgomery. By special orders of "the Dandy," as Mad Anthony was also called, they were "fresh shaved and well powdered."

At eight that night the column had made its way

silently southward over the mountain trails to Springsteel's farm. Here they could see the lights of Stony Point, a mile and a half away to the east; and here the men learned for the first time what was ahead of them.

They were formed in three columns, and in the silence of the summer night the order of battle was read. One detachment, led by Wayne and Febiger, was to attack from the southern end of the swamp, preceded by Colonel Fleury with one hundred and fifty picked men. Another was to strike from the north—these two assaults being made with arms unloaded, “placing their *whole* dependence on fixed bayonets.” The third column's part was a feigned attack across the causeway, firing rapidly to divert the enemy's attention from the real attempt.

Utter silence was to be observed, and any man who fired before orders was to be instantly put to death by the nearest officers.

Each man was given a piece of white paper to fasten to his hat, that they might know friend from enemy in the darkness. “When the works are forced, and *not before*, the victorious troops will give the watchword, ‘The fort is ours,’ with repeated and loud voices.” Rewards were offered to the first men entering the works: any one who ran or skulked was to be shot immediately.

The order wound up:

“As General Wayne is determined to share the danger of the night, so he wishes to participate in the glory of the day, in common with his fellow soldiers.”

Wayne and a few of the officers cautiously reconnoitred, checked up each route, and found no sign that the British anticipated their coming.

Then, at half past eleven, the commander took his place at the head of Febiger's detachment.

"Forward," said he.

The three detachments crept ahead into the blackness. They passed down the slope for half a mile, then separated, each making for its allotted post. Twenty axemen were in front to cut a path through the abatis. Every man was tense with anticipation, wondering when the big guns would flame out from the stronghold looming up ahead, hoping for success in the daring effort, but hardly venturing to breathe as they drew closer and closer to the silent bulk on the height.

Half an hour after midnight, Wayne and his four or five hundred men reached the southern end of the swamp. The tide was in, and instead of a sand-beach there was a stretch of water two hundred yards wide and waist-deep.

There was no help for it. The leading squad splashed into the water. The noise cut sharply through the quiet night air. A British sentry on the opposite shore heard it and promptly challenged:

"Who goes there?"

There was no answer.

The sentry's gun flashed in the darkness. A bullet *zipped* along beside the waders. The report that broke the silence sounded like a cannon to the strained ears of the attacking party.

"Advance! Advance!" called Wayne.

The men abandoned all effort at concealment and floundered desperately across the little bay. They heard the central column of their comrades open a spluttering fire at the causeway, in an attempt to do their part. Before they were half-way across, they

heard more than this. There were alarms and the roll of drums and sharp commands from the fort above; then, with a roar, the guns of the batteries came into action.

Heeding neither grape-shot nor musket-balls, the little force reached the shore and raced upward with fixed bayonets. Those in advance reached the abatis, and their skilled axes were instantly busy.

In a few moments they had opened a gap through both lines of obstructions. Wayne's party rushed through, climbing over trunks and stakes. But at this moment a terrific volley from the fort swept the breach.

Seventeen men fell. Wayne himself went down, struck in the head.

"March on," he shouted.

Then he called to his aides. "Help me into the fort," he commanded. "If this is mortal, I'll die at the head of my column."

Up they went, Wayne supported by his officers. They were muddy, wet, ragged, breathless, wounded. Volley after volley of musketry, of shells and grape-shot rained upon them. Nothing could stop the charge.

Colonel Fleury was the first over the breastworks, but the rest were close behind. The gunners were thrown back by the impetuous onset.

As the leaders gained a footing within the fortifications, they set up a shout, according to orders: "The fort's our own! The fort's our own!"

The cry was repeated down the line, as the Americans threw themselves upon the confused garrison in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle.

In a few moments it was re-echoed from the other side of the fort, the column from the north having

reached the fortifications almost simultaneously with Wayne's body.

To add to the confusion of the British, the firing from the causeway was mistaken for the real attack, as had been planned.

In consequence, the various companies of the garrison were disordered and isolated. Although the 17th Regiment had a fighting record in the British army, and though individual detachments resisted to the utmost, the two wings of the American attack swept all before them.

In less than half an hour all was over. Stony Point had been taken. The British flag was hauled down, the guns trained on the ships in the river. The British had lost sixty-three killed, seventy wounded, and four hundred and seventy-three were taken prisoners— instant quarter being given when asked for. One lieutenant escaped by swimming to the war-ship *Vulture* in the river.

On the American side there were fifteen killed and eighty-three wounded, two-thirds of these casualties being among Wayne's column.

The latter paid no attention to his own wound. His despatch to General Washington ran as follows:

"The fort and garrison with Colonel Johnson are ours.

"Our officers and men behaved like men who are determined to be free."

From a military point of view Stony Point was a slight matter. But as a gallant exploit it deserves the fame it reflected upon "Mad Anthony," who became more than ever the idol of his soldiers.

CHAPTER XXIII

WINNING A MEDAL OF HONOR

DURING the American Civil War, Congress decided to recognize, by the award of a medal of honor, acts of conspicuous bravery, outside the strict lines of duty and performed on a soldier's own initiative.

About one thousand four hundred of these medals were awarded up to the Spanish War, twenty-six more being granted during that conflict. There is a tale of bravery back of every one of these medals. Perhaps as good an example as any of the "fighting spirit" is the action that won this coveted reward for Private Michael Dillon.

On May 5, 1862, General Hooker's division, after a long march through rain and mud, became engaged with the Confederates at Fort Magruder, near Williamsburg, Virginia.

The fight went on in a drenching storm all afternoon. Hooker's ammunition ran low, reinforcements did not come, and the tired soldiers were feeling all the depression of a hard struggle under such conditions against a superior force.

The Confederates charged repeatedly from the fort, and during one of these onslaughts they captured a battery of four guns.

The guns were important, but there was in addition that feeling of disgrace at losing artillery, second in a soldier's mind only to the loss of colors.

A youngster named Michael Dillon, a private in the 2d New Hampshire Infantry, sprang to his feet. Calling his companions to join him, he started forward.

His lieutenant called him back, fearing his reckless exposure would concentrate the enemy's fire on their position.

"Get down, Dillon!" he shouted. "You're drawing their fire."

But Dillon was beyond thought of discipline or anything else except those guns.

"What are we here for?" he retorted. "Come on, boys, come on!" said he to his hesitating fellows. "We mustn't let them have that battery."

His example was catching. A group of daredevils leaped up alongside of him. Waving his arms in the air, the young private, who had suddenly transformed himself into a leader, dashed forward through the smoke and débris with his volunteers behind him.

Dillon was struck in the leg by a ball. He stanchd the flow of blood and kept on. Just as they reached the enemy, an exploding shell shattered his musket in his hands.

Throwing away the useless fragment, he picked up the weapon of a fallen companion, and plunged into the mêlée with his little group.

The charge was so bold and sudden that the Confederates were thrown into confusion. In a few minutes of savage hand-to-hand fighting, Battery H of the 1st Artillery was recaptured and brought off in triumph.

There are several other glimpses of Dillon in action. A month later, just before the battle of Oak Grove, General Hooker called for volunteers to take a redoubt beside the Williamsburg road.

It looked like a forlorn hope, but Dillon was one of the first to step forward.

His lieutenant again remonstrated with him, saying

that he would be needed with the command, as there was desperate work ahead. But Dillon's fighting blood was up.

"General Hooker needs desperate work done too," said he. "He's asked for volunteers, and I'm going."

The volunteers charged across an open field, in the face of a withering fire of artillery and musketry. Nothing could stop them. Dillon was among the leaders as they scrambled over the parapet. In a few moments of deadly struggle, they swept the Confederates back and the redoubt was captured.

Again, a week later, he was in the tragic Seven Days' battles before Richmond. There was a lull in the fighting. Young Dillon set out alone on a scouting expedition. Crawling forward at dusk among the grass and bushes, he reached the enemy's line, managed to secrete himself where he could overhear a discussion of the Confederate plans, and returned safely with information that enabled General Hooker to alter his plans and win a victory in the ensuing fight.

Every war produces such men. Death loses its terrors in the excitement of a dash against overwhelming odds. Clearly Michael Dillon can well stand as a type of such a soldier.

CHAPTER XXIV

TWO SCOTCHMEN—AND A MACHINE-GUN

THE great war which convulsed the world in 1914 has often been spoken of as a conflict of science and organization, rather than of soldiers. It is true that enormous guns, air-ships, submarines, poison-gas, and the wonderfully accurate and effective handling of men and supplies somewhat obscure the individuals in that colossal struggle.

But whenever battle was joined the brave man stood out as he has done since the beginning of history. It would be easy to fill many volumes with the exploits of men who distinguished themselves in any one of the armies.

Let us listen to a Scotchman's own story of how he won the Victoria Cross. This little piece of bronze, simply inscribed "For Valor," has for half a century been one of the most prized rewards of the English soldier, sailor, or civilian.

George Wilson says:

"The proudest minute in my life was when the King pinned the Victoria Cross on my breast and talked to me for a few minutes.

"'You're not a very big man but you've got a very big heart. Truly I'm proud of my soldiers.' These were the words he used, and there were tears in his eyes. The King also asked me what were my feelings while I was going through the job, and I told him the thing I remembered best was when the German officer tried to shoot me with his revolver and I put the bayonet through him.

"After the retirement from Mons the Highland Light Infantry came to a village called Verneuil, and we were intrenched there. Not far off a few snipers were potting away. One of our officers got up out of the trench and was just kneeling down and putting the binoculars to his eyes when a bullet struck him. He rolled over dead. I was a few paces off, and turning to the next man, I said: 'Poor Powell is over and I'll have revenge.'

"We tried all we could to locate the snipers, and I was lucky to get a good sight of them. Two bullets from my rifle did for them, and then we advanced cautiously nearer the enemy. When we were getting nearer I was surprised to see a number of spiked bayonets. I was taken aback for a second, but then I decided to make a rush for it.

"Shouting at the top of my voice, 'Charge, men, charge,' I rushed at them. They were taken by surprise and threw down their rifles. Two men in the Middlesex regiment came up and I told them to look after the Germans. There were eight of them.

"Farther along I took up my position in a trench, but when I looked over I was horrified to see men lying about in all sorts of positions. Some were dead and others were writhing in agony. I asked the man next me what was wrong, and he said: 'It's a Maxim, and it's not done with its work yet.'

"I stood up to see for myself. The machine-gun of the Germans was not a great distance off, and I said to myself: 'It will kill us all if something doesn't happen to it.' I thought I would at least have one good shot, and got in position to fire. The officer told me to get down, but I was so excited that I ran forward. Beside me there was a man in the Middlesex

regiment and he turned to me and said: 'Jack, will you have a try to stop the gun?' I said I would, and he replied: 'I'll go with you.'

"By this time we had got beyond range of the officer's orders, for we had gone without permission.

"Then began a journey that as long as I live will ever remain in my memory.

"The Germans saw us coming and bullets flew thick around us. My pal was struck in several places and dropped. I ran zigzag and dropped on my knees to take a shot at the operators of the machine-gun. My first shot knocked the man sitting on the Maxim backward. His place was taken by another German, but he, too, I accounted for. How I escaped being hit myself I cannot explain. There seemed to me a good Providence keeping guard over me.

"When four of the Germans were killed, there only remained an officer beside the gun. He had crept behind it and was waiting for me with his automatic pistol ready.

"I rushed forward, yelling at the top of my voice, when the pistol started to spit. One bullet just passed the side of my head and my ear tingled. That was all the damage that German officer did. I sprang at him in wild fury and drove the bayonet straight into his body. He collapsed, and to withdraw the steel I had to put my foot on his face. My clothes were spattered with blood, but I felt much easier in mind, and I put down my rifle and turned to the belt containing ammunition.

"There were over seven hundred rounds left. I shifted the Maxim round in the direction of the Germans. They were over a hundred yards off and massed in close formation. I started firing, and to my delight

I saw big holes being made in their ranks, for it was impossible to miss them. They fell in bunches and the heaps kept piling up.

"The enemy now saw the deadly effect of their own gun being used against themselves and sent shells in my direction. They flew on all sides of me and threw up dirt and splinters, but not once was I struck. I continued working the Maxim until the Germans fled in disorder.

"There must have been four companies of Germans altogether, and I reckon the Maxim accounted for at least half their number—two hundred men.

"As there was no further use in my remaining where I was, I took the gun and two boxes of ammunition back to our lines. I hadn't gone very far when I began to feel sickish, but once I came near our own lads I bucked up and an officer came to meet me.

"'There's the thing that's been causing all the damage,' I said to him, and he replied: 'You have done splendidly.'

"Then I was told that my comrade was still lying out in the open, and I told those near me that I would fetch him in. They told me not to risk it, as the snipers were again busy potting. However, I wasn't going to rest until I had made an effort to save him.

"I reached my pal all safe and lifted him on my shoulder. When I had gone a few yards a terrible storm of bullets hailed around us. I felt the finger of one of my hands tingle. A bullet had just grazed it. My poor mate was, however, struck several times, and he did not live long after I carried him into our lines.

"His dying words to me were: 'Thank God you got that gun.'"

CHAPTER XXV

DUELS BETWEEN AEROPLANE AND ZEPPELIN

It is a great temptation to tell some more stories of the men who won the Victoria Cross in the great war: Sergeant O'Leary, who charged ahead of his fellow guards at Cuinchy, took a German trench with two barricades, killed eight men, and captured two more and a machine-gun—single-handed; Miller of the "Black Watch," whose comment upon the desperate struggle was, "I'm telling ye, laddie, it was a wee bit warm"; Lieutenant Dimmer, who stuck to his gun till it was blown to fragments and he was wounded five times; and a host of others. Moreover, these stirring exploits could be duplicated from the records of every country engaged in the struggle.

Some of the most dramatic events were in the new battle-field of the air.

In June, 1915, Victor Chapman, a young American in the French Aviation Corps, was carrying some oranges to a near-by hospital when he came upon three French aeroplanes beset by four Germans. Rising to a great height, he swooped down into the fight. In a few moments his accurate fire sent two German machines to earth. Then the redoubtable Captain Boelke managed to turn and rake him with a machine-gun—and the gallant youngster plunged lifeless down to the German lines.

Before the end of the war's third year, one French airman, refused admittance to the army five times be-

cause of his size, and having joined the flying corps, had accounted for nearly forty enemy aeroplanes; and Baron von Richthofen, on the German side, had brought down sixty-two hostile machines; each combat representing a tale of intrepidity well worth telling. It would be hard to exaggerate the courage displayed every day by hundreds of fliers when the aerial forces were once organized.

A particularly picturesque combat was between an aeroplane and a Zeppelin in the first year.

At three o'clock in the morning of June 7, 1915, a Zeppelin air-ship appeared over the British lines in Belgium. It was returning from an attack on the English coast or from a scouting expedition.

Among the airmen there was a young Canadian sub-lieutenant, A. J. Warneford. He had made his first aeroplane flight only four months before, and had joined the flying squadron one month back, but had already made his mark as a born aviator, with an utter disregard of danger.

Warneford instantly leaped into his machine and started in pursuit accompanied by a French aviator in his aeroplane.

Their rifle-fire produced no result, the Germans replying with rifles and machine-guns.

At once, too, the Zeppelin began to rise to keep above her wasp-like enemies.

A thrilling struggle for position followed. In great spirals Warneford circled up and up, following the giant air-ship, which was all the time speeding toward her home hangar at Ghent.

At the end of about twenty minutes the Zeppelin was ten or fifteen miles from the spot where she had been sighted and nearly a mile high. But the persistent

Warneford could not be shaken off. He was using the tactics of a king-bird attacking a crow.

On and up he circled, till he found himself, at an altitude of six thousand feet, speeding directly above the great gas-bag.

With cool accuracy he began to drop his explosive bombs, as if at target practice. Two or three slight explosions showed that his missiles had found their mark.

The sixth again fell squarely upon the vulnerable bag of the air-ship.

There was a terrific roar and burst of flame. Suddenly converted into a mass of blazing wreckage, the great Zeppelin fell like a meteor to the earth, carrying all its crew to destruction and setting fire to the buildings on which it landed.

The force of the explosion directly beneath him turned Warneford's monoplane completely upside down. The machine pitched and tossed in the swift air-currents, and it looked as if the leviathan's expiring breath would surely involve its destroyer in its own ruin.

The plucky aviator, however, did not lose heart.

Making a supreme effort, he succeeded in righting the machine and planed down from his lofty position to earth, far within the enemy's lines.

He alighted unhurt. Quickly the propeller was started once more, and rising aloft he flew back to his own camp in safety.

King George bestowed the Victoria Cross on the young Canadian by telegram the following day; and upon the recommendation of General Joffre, the French Legion of Honor also rewarded his intrepid feat.

Another successful Zeppelin chase took place in the spring of 1916.

"Another raid across England—the bombs, dropped from the clouds, burst into little fires below—the great Zeppelins, their work done for the night, are ploughing homeward through the clouds. But there is one that lags behind. Perhaps there was engine trouble, perhaps the pilot went astray, possibly it was sent out on a longer course than the rest. At all events, it is seen emerging in the dawn, a gray bulk against a gray sky, trailing such a cloud of smoke as indicates that the engines are at full speed in a frantic endeavor to get home before hostile aeroplanes can rise to the attack. Already the commander detects two moving dots on the sky behind him and regards them anxiously. The wireless has flashed a report of the raid from England, and the French airmen have been on the lookout for the raider. As the German watches them, they poise a moment, then dart upward, and every moment grow slightly larger to the sight. They have seen the airship and are in pursuit. Can he outrun them?

"This is the drama staged in the story of a young American air-pilot with the French army. As his aeroplane rose to join in the chase and the others closed in on the Zeppelin, the German craft took refuge in the clouds.

"A brilliant burst of sunlight suddenly reveals the ship to the aviators, and the Zeppelin captain also discovers us as we wheel around to pursue. We are at a lower level and we promptly start climbing. The Zeppelin leaps upward, and, setting her elevation-planes, seeks to gain a still greater advantage in height.

"To us below it looked as though pursuit were helpless, but we held on grimly. Steadily we gained in forward speed. Our engines were fresh, while the

Zeppelin motors were feeling the strain of long running at high speed. When the affair settled into a stern chase the Zeppelin opened fire.

"We were prepared for this and kept as close as possible in the wake of the German ship, thus masking the guns in the forward cabin. But the Zeppelin, learning a lesson from previous encounters, had guns in the rear cabin, and, despite the disadvantage of shooting in a line parallel with the keel, they made rapid practice on the aeroplanes.

"The situation grew desperate for the Zeppelin. All the ballast had been thrown out, gasolene was running short, and the engines were showing signs of increasing weakness and irregular running.

"Undeterred by the guns, one of our squadron of aeroplanes had already climbed to the same level as the air-ship and was steadily rising to a height where it would be concealed from the Zeppelin guns by the body of the ship itself. A great burst of forward speed could alone save the commander of the Zeppelin from being overtaken by the enemy.

"The machine which I was piloting was the second to rise above the fire-zone, though one ragged wing showed a wound of the fray.

"As a balloon the Zeppelin could rise no higher, for all her ballast had been sacrificed. The captain decided to bring his elevating planes back to normal and stake all on a high-speed flight in a horizontal course. He was encouraged in this by the sight of his German lines below, with the landmarks which he knew so well. Puffs of smoke told him that the aeroplanes were being shelled by German gunners, that the bombardment showered upon us might relieve him at any moment. Indeed, some of the shots burst so near the Zeppelin

that the commander must have had an indifferent opinion of the gunners' marksmanship.

"Then suddenly the firing from below ceased. Too well the commander of the Zeppelin knew what that meant! The gunners below dared not fire for fear of hitting his ship, and so the planes must now be poised directly above him, the vantage-point from which a dirigible is always utterly at the mercy of any aeroplane armed with bombs.

"When I talked afterward with a comrade in a machine below the level of the Zeppelin, he told me of the intense agony which the Zeppelin crew suffered as they looked at each other with horror-stricken eyes. Without doubt their one possessing thought was: 'What is happening above us?' From their little cabins there was no possibility of an upward survey, for the great body of the ship loomed above them, shutting out the overhead view.

"But the crew of the Zeppelin could picture in their minds' eyes those two gaunt birds, of which I happened to be piloting one, flying after them remorselessly as Fate, and inch by inch gaining on them. Well did the crew know that the Zeppelin would soon be beneath the aeroplanes. A bomb will drop on the great ship's back, and then——

"In a frenzy the captain plunged his ship downward and swung her to the right with a swerve that threatened to break her spine. But the elephantine manoeuvre availed him little. We in the aeroplanes could dive and swerve with the grace of swallows, while the giant ship lumbered like a derelict balloon.

"We summoned up all our remaining nerve-energy. Our prize was just within our grasp—he must not escape. If he did we would most easily become the

prey of the anti-aircraft guns that were waiting their chance to send aloft their deadly hail of shrapnel.

“Down swept our bombs with unerring accuracy. There was a dull thud and then a sheet of flame, spreading with lightning speed, in a moment enveloping the entire massive vessel. The burning hydrogen consumed it with appalling fury, and in a few instants the great ship, crumbling and melting, hurtled to earth like a blazing meteor.

“From the earth many guns spoke. They but served only for the firing-salute over the graves of the fallen.”



PART IV

SOME EXPLOITS ON THE SEA

The sea mothers hardy spirits. Her sons who face her mighty wrath take little heed of human odds. There is an epic strain, a Viking blaze, in every seafaring race, no matter what be the nationality, which is aroused by the fierce emergencies of battle.

The first difficulty in this section was to select a few from among so many. To leave out Salamis, to omit all those stormy romances of the "baresark" Norsemen, of Drake, Van Tromp, De Ruyter, Jean Bart, and many another seemed impossible. Equally so not to tell of that superb attack, in April, 1917, of two English captains, in the little vessels "Swift" and "Broke," upon a flotilla of six German destroyers raiding in the Straits of Dover: how they dashed upon the enemy, ramming and firing, torpedoing one which had surrendered and then treacherously renewed the fight—till two of the raiders were sunk, and the rest ignominiously fled.

There would be no end to the sea-stories if one did not simply make an end.

There is another stumbling-block. Ordinary prose, the calm phrases of peaceful life, become childishly inadequate to portray the figures that dominate the great crises of naval warfare—Grenville in his little "Revenge" fighting twenty larger Spanish war-ships to a standstill, Nelson signalling his fleet at Trafalgar to "Engage the enemy more closely," Paul Jones at that volcanic moment when

he had "just begun to fight." These seem like Supermen. They require meteor words, an alphabet of wings and fire.

And while we hope for the day when no man will wish to slay a fellow man because he is of another nation, we find inspiration in the deeds of these flaming spirits. We can separate their mastery from its motives and its results. We can glory in these evidences that man's nature may be forged and tempered and whetted to such a sword-edge—confident that in the future this cleaving weapon will serve against the common enemies of humanity even more nobly than it has in these civil wars of mankind.

Lest we forget this, our common heritage, there follow a few glimpses of man indomitable on the face of the waters.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE EPIC OF THE *REVENGE*

OVER three hundred years ago an Englishman set a mark of haughty and dogged courage in sea-fighting which has sufficed ever since to measure all other exploits on the water.

It happened thus.

An English squadron lay at anchor in the harbor of Flores, one of the westerly islands of the Azores, in late August, 1591. There were six rather small men-of-war, together with seven provision-ships and three little pinnaces, commanded by Sir Thomas Howard.

For six months this force had been cruising, with the object of cutting off the Spanish treasure-fleet; ships and men were in such a bad way that Howard had been forced to put into Flores for water, ballast, and repairs, and to give the sick a chance to recover on shore. Full half the sailors were down with fever or scurvy—not enough well men had been left on the *Bonaventure*, for instance, to handle the mainsail, and it had been necessary to take the crew of twenty out of a bark of Sir George Cary's, and sink that smaller vessel, in order to bring in this war-ship.

Though the commander still hoped the treasure-ships might come along—these western islands being the meeting-place of the Portuguese fleets from the East Indies and of the Spanish West India carriers—he was for the time devoting all his attention to getting his crews well and his vessels seaworthy once more. The haggard sick were sent ashore; those who could work

were employed in filling water-casks, loading fresh ballast, cleaning, and refitting. Everything was in the disorder accompanying such repairs; and while the captains expected no attack, their fear lest they might after all lose the chance they had been so long pursuing made them drive the work along as fast as they dared under the circumstances.

The vice-admiral was Sir Richard Grenville. He was "a man very unquiet in his mind and greatly affected to war," and had seen hot campaigning under Maximilian in Hungary against the Turks. His first sea-service, however, had been only six years before this time, when he had commanded the expedition to Virginia in the interest of the colony projected by Sir Walter Raleigh, his cousin. Returning, he had distinguished himself by overpowering a Spaniard who attacked his ship, and setting off to take possession of his prize on a crazy raft knocked together from old chests—which fell to pieces as they reached their capture. He had also been bitterly complained of by his associates for "intolerable pride"; but all admitted him one "of great and stout courage," and there were many tales of his valiant acts in the ensuing years when he harried the Spaniards of the Azores towns. The latter afterward avowed that he was of "so hard a complexion" that he was wont to crunch up his wine-glass between his teeth and swallow the fragments!

His ship in Howard's squadron was the *Revenge*. She was a five-hundred-ton craft, with two tiers of guns, normally carrying two hundred and fifty men; and though she had been Drake's flag-ship in the memorable fight with the Armada, she had a record of bad luck going back almost to her launching at Chatham by stout John Hawkins twelve years before. She had

been cast away on the Kentish coast; ashore at Plymouth; twice aground at Portsmouth—the second time with six feet of water in her hold; she had almost foundered with all hands going up the Thames; and earlier in this very year she had turned turtle.

There was more than enough in her history to make superstitious tars grumble and prophesy dark things. Yet she was a crack second-rate war-ship, and every man of her crew felt unbounded confidence in her smartness under sail, as well as in her commander.

Ninety of her sailors were among the sick on shore, and the remaining hundred were hard at work, like every other well man in the fleet, on the afternoon of August 31.

They paid no attention to a tiny pinnace which appeared at the mouth of the harbor and stood in toward the flag-ship, with every stitch of canvas drawing in the fresh breeze.

The pinnace rounded-to alongside of the *Defiance*. Its captain, Middleton, scrambled hastily aboard. In a few moments he was closeted below with Sir Thomas Howard.

It was a life-and-death message he had raced hither to deliver. The Earl of Cumberland had despatched him from the Portugal coast with news of a great Spanish fleet of war-ships, bound to the Azores to surprise the English squadron: the daring Middleton had actually sailed along with this Armada for three days, in order to get first-hand information of its force and destination. Then he had cut loose with his swift craft to warn the admiral.

Fifty-three vessels, twenty of them war-ships—and the whole liable to be down upon them within twenty-four hours! Sir Thomas had no need to call a council

of war, or even to go on deck, to come to a decision. His squadron was in no condition to engage even an equal force: half-manned, and with some of the ships so light and so foul as to be almost unmanageable, he would be fighting under fearful handicaps. And even had all been in perfect trim, there was no disgrace in avoiding such odds.

He gave instant orders to recall the shore parties and prepare the vessels for sailing.

But this work had hardly begun when to his dismay the cry of "Sail ho!" rang out. Every eye turned to the west. There, gleaming white in the sunlight, appeared the clustering sails of the overwhelming Spanish force.

Signals raced up the halyards of the *Defiance*, ordering every captain to sail as speedily as possible. There followed a breathless interval. Working desperately against time, while the enemy swept down with the wind, the English commanders strove to get their sick aboard, and their ships in some sort of order, before the one road of retreat was cut off. In wild confusion, sails were set, and one after another the vessels took wing like a flock of startled ducks, all bent on gaining the position of safety to windward. Several had not time left even to weigh anchor, but slipped their cables and made off, setting every rag of sail that might add speed.

Grenville was in some way delayed. He absolutely refused to move till the last of his sick were aboard, well knowing that the Inquisition would be their fate if captured. Anyhow, as vice-admiral, his place was in the rear. At last the *Revenge* stood out, her helpless ninety laid on the ballast in the hold, the rest of the crew, a scant hundred, striving to get the cluttered decks and the guns to rights.

Ahead, the last of her consorts had barely slipped out of the trap. But its jaws were closing so fast, as the Armada swung down on the weather-bow, that it soon became evident the *Revenge* was too late to escape in that way.

Closer and closer came the stately array of hostile vessels. The great galleons loomed larger and larger, disclosing their triple gun-decks, with death peering from every black port-hole. One of these floating castles, the *San Philip*, alone was three times the size of the *Revenge*, with thirty-three guns to each broad-side, besides stern-guns and eight bow-chasers. And in addition the water behind her seemed full of ships, a score of them, armed and almost as formidable as this towering monster.

It was sheer madness to head that way any longer. The master of the *Revenge*, who knew her sailing powers, saw there was but one hope for her. By keeping away large, her swiftness might enable her to double on the enemy and regain the company of the squadron.

He gave orders to cut the mainsail.

To his dismay, Sir Richard commanded in a voice of thunder that no one should touch it, swearing he would hang the first man who did so.

Both master and captain remonstrated, pointing out that there was no other possibility of saving the ship. But Grenville's mind was made up.

"Rather would I choose to die," he cried, "than so to dishonor myself, my country, and her Majesty's ship by turning from the enemy."

And he boldly announced his resolve to sail through both these great squadrons and force a passage to the open.

Protest was useless. And carried away by the great-

ness of his spirit, officers and men made ready with a sort of grim exaltation. The gunners stood to their pieces; every man of the inadequate force who could be spared seized pike and cutlass. In a silence full of deadly promise, the *Revenge* held her course straight into the advancing throng of foes.

A single ship against twenty larger ones.

A hundred men against fifteen thousand.

Several of the leaders sprang their luff and fell off under the lee of the English vessel. And presently the tense silence aboard the *Revenge* deepened. She lost way. The sails flapped idly. Grenville and his men looked up at the massive bulk of the *San Philip* towering right above them, so high that the little *Revenge* was completely "blanketed."

The helmsman spun his wheel, but the ship answered to neither rudder nor sail. Still the high-decked galleon loomed up to windward, looking almost like a rock-cliff fortress lined with soldiers—for she carried eight hundred fighting-men besides her mariners, and the three tiers of guns, eleven in each, looked sufficient to annihilate the *Revenge* at one broadside.

The clustering Spaniards laughed aloud as they gazed down on this puny antagonist and the handful who manned her. It was like the meeting of a mastiff and a terrier.

And still no sound or movement came from the Englishmen.

Slowly the *San Philip* ranged up alongside. With the same ponderous solemnity, two galleons luffed up to starboard, one of them the *Admiral of the Biscaines*, "a very mightie and puyasant shippe," while two more laid themselves to larboard.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon. The

sun blazed down upon this solitary vessel, the centre of a threatening ring, the mark upon which was concentrated over a hundred great guns and the muskets of a couple of thousand soldiers. Little chance did there seem that she or any one aboard would see that sun dip even half-way to the western horizon.

The galleons opened upon her with successive volleys like a series of blasts exploding.

"Fire!" commanded Grenville at last from the centre of that volcano.

With a cheer the English gunners came to life. The lower tier of cannon, loaded with cross-bar shot, hurled their crashing missiles into the vitals of the *San Philip*. So terrific was the effect of this volley that the great galleon swung hastily away, "utterly misliking her first entertainment."

But another took her place. The battle was fairly joined. The four Spaniards swept the *Revenge* with a hail of shot, great and small, while the Englishmen, stripped to the waist, worked their guns in a frenzy of passion.

Splashed with blood, amid a chaos of dead and wounded comrades, disabled guns, splintered wood, crashing rigging, they hammered their enemy to east and west. The red flashes split the heavy pall of smoke and sulphur fumes that settled over all. When a man fell, another was in his place almost before he struck the deck. Undismayed by the utter hopelessness of the odds, they radiated destruction upon each of their assailants.

Grenville was wounded early in the fight, but he disregarded it and cheered his men on to their desperate work. His indomitable spirit seemed to burn in every member of that gallant one hundred, and as their num-

bers lessened, those who were left but fought the harder. A wild *huzza!* rang out as the largest galley, the *Admiral of the Hulks*, sank under the fierce rain of balls.

Finding that their combined broadsides could not crush the berserker attack of these mad Englishmen, the Spaniards ranged alongside and tried to board. Time and again Grenville and his few followers beat them back, from bow and stern, from starboard and larboard, one rush after another, with fresh companies ever behind to take the places of those they cut down and thrust through and hurled over the bulwarks.

Hour after hour continued this Homeric combat. When one of the galleons had had enough, she sheered off and another took her place. Always the *Revenge* lay between from two to four, spouting heavy shot and musket-balls, boarding in superior numbers, drawing when needed on fresh ships, fresh men, fresh ammunition.

And still the *Revenge* fought on.

She fought while the sun sank slowly to the west. She fought alone. In the beginning of the struggle, the little *George Noble*, a provision-boat with a couple of guns, lay close by under her lee; badly hulled as she was, her captain hailed Grenville and asked for orders.

"Save yourself," commanded Sir Richard calmly "and leave me to my fortune."

Whereat she sped away and disappeared from sight after the rest of the squadron.

Thomas Vavasour in the *Foresight*, too, hung on for a couple of hours, aiding his comrade as well as he could at long range. Then he had to choose, and followed the admiral, barely clearing himself from the pursuers. And Howard himself would have turned back with his whole force when he saw Grenville in the midst of

the enemy. But his master declared he would cast himself overboard rather than take part in this suicidal throwing away of the whole squadron. So the admiral had reluctantly held on his course. From five o'clock on, the flag that fluttered above the *Revenge* had been utterly alone among the pennants of Castile.

But ever the *Revenge* fought on.

The red sun was swallowed up in the dancing waves. Night fell. The stars peered down at this convulsed patch of murkier, man-made night upon the waters, riven by sheets of flame, blown to and fro by cannon-breaths, shrouding blood and death and wounds, attack and repulse—but surcharged with undying human resolve, electric with the spirit that battles while life lasts.

For still the *Revenge* fought on.

Shortly before midnight Grenville was again wounded, with a musket-ball through the body. While the surgeon was dressing this hurt, another volley came. The surgeon fell dead. Sir Richard received another shot in the head.

Hastily bandaged up somehow, he took command again, and through the long night watches he held his men to their task while the enemy's assaults continued.

For the *Revenge* still fought as if the action had just begun.

Gray dawn came. The galleons attacked now only at intervals. Practically all of them had had their taste of this night's banquet, and after fifteen hours they were losing stomach for it. But while each new onslaught was beaten off, it left an ever smaller group of defenders. Nearly all these were wounded; but each man who could stand, loaded and fired a gun, or sprang with raised cutlass to repel boarders. Time

seemed utterly blotted out. It was as if the battle had lasted from the beginning of things and would keep on till eternity. Thought and emotion were not. The horrors about no longer made any impression. Life was but a succession of automatic firings, slashings, thrustings, waitings.

And the *Revenge* fought on.

Slowly the sun rose. His beams lit up such a scene as was never beheld in the history of the world.

A smiling summer sea rippled in the morning breeze. There lay the *Revenge*—what was left of her by the eight hundred heavy shot she had received. Her masts were shot away, tangled masses of rigging hung bunched along her sides. Her upper work was razed clean: merely the lower part of a hull remained, and that was battered, splintered, pierced with gaping shot-holes. Dead, dying and wounded, English and Spanish, lay in heaps. Blood-pools washed to and fro in the scuppers as she rolled. Of her hundred men, less than half were alive: many of these were badly hurt. Sir Richard himself was so desperately wounded he could not stand.

Ringed her about, but at a respectful distance, lay the galleons of the Armada. Two had gone to the bottom. Two more had been run ashore in a sinking state. Hardly one of the remaining sixteen but showed the marks of English cannon. Nearly two thousand Spanish soldiers were dead.

Yet the English flag still floated from the stump of a mast.

Like a pack of hounds about a dying boar they lay, the memory of his tusks so keen that they had no mind save to glare and growl, the while they licked their wounds. A hundred to one in men and cannon, they

had been fought to a standstill. So they lay impotent, watching, waiting. They were brave men, but this went beyond human calculation. They knew not what to expect. In all that long war no English ship had yet struck its flag to a Spaniard. This insignificant craft, at which they had laughed fifteen hours before, was still afloat. She could not escape, but she seemed manned by demons. They waited.

The last barrel of powder had been broached aboard that shattered hulk. The pikes were bent or broken. The decks were a shambles. What was left of the crew could not survive another hand-to-hand assault.

Yet the wounded leader was of the same high mind as when he sailed into the throng of hostile sea-castles.

He called his master-gunner to where he lay and commanded him to blow up the ship, that "nothing might be left of glory or victory to the Spaniards."

"Let us yield ourselves unto God," said he, "and to none else. Having like valiant, resolute men repulsed so many enemies, let us not now shorten the honor of our nation in order to prolong our lives a few hours or a few days."

The master-gunner, "a most resolute man," was well content at this, as were several others. But the captain and the master were of another mind. They besought Sir Richard to have care of those that were left. They urged that the enemy would be as willing as themselves to treat, since he no longer dared to attack. Surely they had done enough for honor. Moreover, the ship had six feet of water in the hold, and three holes below the water-line, so weakly stopped that she would certainly sink, and the Spaniards would have short glory of her. It was time to give the few left the

chance of life and of fighting again which they had so well earned.

It was a strong argument, especially from one who, like the master, had already had a dozen wounds. It was, indeed, hard common sense. But the half-dead man who lay there was on a plane above common sense. He refused to consider the idea of surrender.

While the matter was being discussed, and the captain was endeavoring to persuade the men to his view, the master privately got into a boat and rowed across to the *General Don Alfonso Basson*, to sound the Spanish admiral as to terms. He so skilfully set forth his commander's desperate resolve, that, between fear of losing their prize after all and enforced admiration of the defense, the Spaniard offered to spare the lives of the crew and send them back to England, as well as to admit the officers to reasonable ransom without confinement to galley or prison.

Returning with this surprising offer, the master found it "no hard matter to dissuade men from death to life." The crew could not resist this unexpected chance. They drew away from Sir Richard, and joined their voices to the captain and master in a decision to accept.

At this the master-gunner, who alone held stanch, tried to kill himself with a sword, but was restrained and locked into his cabin.

Down fluttered the flag in token of surrender. A dozen Spanish boats came alongside, and the crew, still fearing what Sir Richard might resolve, stole away in these to safety.

Came then an officer from the admiral, courteously begging Sir Richard to allow himself to be removed out of this slaughter-house to a place where he might be better cared for.

"Do with my body what you list," said this stout heart, "for I esteem it not."

As he was carried to the side, he swooned from loss of blood. He did not see the shattered hulk behind, as the boat rowed rapidly away. It lay, tossing to and fro, deserted, forlorn. Only now had the spirit departed from it.

As the officers gently lifted Grenville aboard the flagship, he recovered consciousness.

"Pray for me," he said to those nearest.

He was treated with every care and respect. Don Alonso himself would not look upon his face; but many of the captains and gentlemen visited him, desirous of beholding this paladin, and all marvelled at his fortitude.

The second or third day thereafter he found himself facing a more inexorable foe than on the deck of his *Revenge*. He looked death in the eyes unafraid. Just before the end he spoke his own epitaph:

HERE DIE I, RICHARD GRENVILLE, WITH A JOYFUL AND QUIET MIND: FOR THAT I HAVE ENDED MY LIFE AS A TRUE SOLDIER OUGHT TO DO, THAT HATH FOUGHT FOR HIS COUNTRY, QUEEN, RELIGION AND HONOUR. WHEREBY MY SOUL MOST JOYFULLY DEPARTETH OUT OF THIS BODY, AND SHALL ALWAYS LEAVE BEHIND IT AN EVERLASTING FAME OF A VALIANT AND TRUE SOLDIER, THAT HATH DONE HIS DUTY AS HE WAS BOUND TO DO.

The Spaniards repaired and manned their dearly bought prize, but the *Revenge* did not serve the enemy for long. Within a week after her master's death, a fearful hurricane swept the Azores. It dashed the *Revenge* upon the rocks of St. Michael's. She sank with

two hundred Spaniards and some of her own crew aboard. And a noble company of thirty more ships of the Armada went down with her in the same storm. Hers was a name of ill omen to Spanish ears.

Those of the crew who reached England received six months' wages from a gracious Queen. Lord Howard, in spite of his own effort at the time, found himself obliged to defend his name against those who felt that Grenville should never have been abandoned.

Some modern historians point out that Sir Richard disobeyed orders and wilfully threw away his ship in a hopeless combat. There is some justice in the charge. But it is at least possible that had the whole squadron attacked with resolution equal to Grenville's, they might have actually won a victory; in which case, besides the glory, they would have achieved their object and taken the treasure-fleet, which arrived just afterward.

And the historian Froude declared this "struck a deeper terror, though it was but the action of a single ship, into the hearts of the Spanish people, it dealt a more deadly blow upon their fame and moral strength, than the destruction of the Armada itself." That suggests justification even from a strictly military standpoint.

But admit that Grenville's act must be counted an error of judgment, even a disobedience of orders. Admit that it resulted in the first lowering of the English flag to a Spanish vessel. His memory can well stand whatever criticism is due.

As Lord Bacon declared, his fight was "memorable beyond credit, and to the Height of some Heroicall Fable."

He made his name and his vessel immortal. He founded a never-say-die tradition in the English navy which has helped to give it for centuries the mastery of the seas. He left for all time a glorious example of human heroism.

For as an inspiration to fortitude still to-day the *Revenge* fights on.

CHAPTER XXVII

THUNDER-SHIELD

THESE tales of brave men afloat run heavily to Englishmen and Americans. Not that those nations have had any monopoly of sea-courage. "There were brave men before Agamemnon"—and after; Greeks and Venetians, Portuguese and Russians, Frenchmen and Spaniards, Dutchmen and Scandinavians, Japanese and Turks, Malay and Barbary corsairs: every nation with a seacoast has had its ocean champions.

But the plain fact of history is that when English and American ships have fought those of other peoples, they have won an overwhelming majority of the battles.

With a few brief interludes (like that in the seventeenth century, when Dutch Van Tromp proudly cruised the English Channel with a broom at his mast-head to show he had swept the water clean of foes; and when De Ruyter a few years later smashed the British fleet and sailed up the Thames itself), Great Britain held almost unchallenged mastery of the Seven Seas for some three hundred years. John Paul Jones and his successors showed there were others—of the same bulldog breed, and a bit better at aiming cannon.

Naturally the victors have the spoils of fame.

Yet there was a certain Peder Wessel who showed so conclusively in 1716 (not to mention various earlier and later episodes) that the blood of the Norse sea-kings still ran hot in at least one Scandinavian son, that he demands a place here.

At the moment when Charles XII of Sweden was beginning his meteoric career of conquest,* Peder was a ragged boy of ten years in the Norwegian town of Trondhjem. How the young King would have smiled if some soothsayer had predicted that this little gutter-snipe, on the bleak Norway coast, four hundred miles to the northwest, would only a few years later frustrate the conqueror's dearest ambition!

Peder was ragged and a gutter-snipe by choice. His alderman father had eminently proper notions, and sufficient money, for clothing his twelve sons and six daughters decorously. In fact, if Peder was a fair sample of the eighteen, it's at least a question if Alderman Wessel did not earn the title of hero (among the martyrs, like St. Lawrence grilled over a slow fire, for example) as thoroughly as his afterward famous boy.

For, to put it plainly, young Peder was a holy terror, a pest, of infinite, persistent, and rarely ingenious pestiferousness.

He was always in rags and tatters, because like Huck Finn his spirits suffered from the confinement of clean, whole garments as definitely as his wrists would from handcuffs. At his wits' end to preserve the family reputation through the stoutest homespuns, the alderman finally invoked his imagination: Peder, to his intense disgust, found himself encased in a pair of leather breeches, guaranteed indestructible for a season or two at least.

But Peder had an imagination too. Impressing a schoolmate to work a grindstone with all his might—Peder sat on the whirling stone, managing to concentrate enough wear and tear upon the most vulnerable spot in those tough breeches to reduce even leather to

* See "A Swedish Conqueror," Part III.

the desired condition. • For several years, if there was any local deviltry that the young ragamuffin wasn't in, it was merely because he was busy with some more enticing mischief elsewhere.

He was naturally in constant fights with other boys as well as with authority, and he learned to use his head as well as his fists: having been once well beaten by a bigger fellow who got a grip of his long hair and punished him unmercifully, Peder presently returned to the fray with hair clipped close (like those cunning old Abantes warriors of whom Homer sings) and pate well slicked with soft soap—and turned the tables.

The schoolmaster gave him up as a hopeless job. His father apprenticed him to a tailor, with a daily thrashing as a prominent part of his instruction: the imp got his chance one winter day—and the shivering tailor regretted every stroke as the snowballs smacked against his stinging face. Next a venturesome barber tried his hand with this untamable urchin. Peder got tired of lathering and scraping, and took to the streets.

King Frederik, ruler over Denmark and Norway, came to Trondhjem. Irresponsible Peder was in the thick of all the gorgeous parades and public festivities, a leader among the fascinated gamins. Evidently he decided that was the life for him. For when the King and the gayly uniformed officers went back to the Danish capital, Peder disappeared from his home town.

I fancy Alderman Wessel and his good wife succeeded in consoling themselves with the thought that there were seventeen left. Certainly Trondhjem schoolmasters, tailors, barbers, and dignified citizens in Sunday silk hats drew a long breath of relief.

The royal chaplain, who happened to be a Nor-

wegian, found the homeless youngster wandering about Copenhagen, and took him in as a household page. But Peder in his first-hand investigations had acquired one absorbing fact: there were fellows not much bigger than he, some of whom he could lick with one hand, who were already midshipmen in the navy.

As usual, he "bucked the centre" for what he wanted. At the ripe age of fifteen, he wrote his Majesty himself:

"I am wearing away my life as a servant," was his plaint. "I want to give it and my blood to the service of your Majesty, and I will serve you with all my strength while I live."

The Swedish ruler had just overwhelmed the Russians, gobbled up Poland, invaded Saxony; Denmark and Norway might expect to be pounced on at any moment. It was no time to lose even one midshipman who wanted to die for his monarch. Peder got his commission, and for three years his exuberance was devoted to the toughening life of a sailor and the study of naval warfare.

Charles's army was shattered at Pultava—which merely meant for Denmark that his restless ambition was concentrated nearer home. Cannons roared over the Scandinavian waters. Ivar Huitfeldt earned an immortal name for himself by fighting his burning *Dannebrog* till she blew up with himself and his five hundred men. Peder's appeals got him at eighteen the command of a little privateer; and so daring were his sallies and scouting expeditions that in a few months he was placed in command of an eighteen-gun frigate.

He interpreted his orders "not to engage any enemy unless he was clearly the stronger" after a fashion of his own: in a Baltic battle he tackled two Swedish line-of-battle ships, and would probably have sunk one

or both had not a third come up, forcing him to retreat, with his vessel so shot to pieces that he was lucky to limp into port for repairs.

His answer to the charge of disobeying orders was:

"I promised your Majesty to do my best, and I did."

Frederik knew a brave man and his worth: he promptly jumped the youngster over the heads of fifty older lieutenants to a captaincy, and turned him loose.

Then Peder Wessel got down to real business. The plain narrative of the next few years sounds as if Dumas's "Musketeers" had turned sailors and taken to the Skagerrak and Baltic.

The Governor of Göteborg, Sweden's chief port on the North Sea, proclaimed a price upon the head of Captain Peder Jansen Wessel. The young commander sent in a message that he was waiting outside the harbor for some one to come and earn this reward. The response was not immediate; and while he lay there, along came two Swedish war-ships with a Danish prize. Though they had ninety-four guns to his eighteen, Peder went for them like a bull-terrier. Their infinitely superior metal drove him off, but he came back again, full of determination to get back that prize. He got three full broadsides instead, and just succeeded in making a Norwegian harbor with his frigate about to founder. His report remarked apologetically that to have let himself be sunk "would not rightly have benefited his Majesty's service."

After one victory he found the Swedes beaching their vessels, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Danish fleet: he halted this by threatening to make every man aboard walk the plank, capturing the ships and the admiral. With sixteen men he cut out a cutter, with eight guns and a crew of thirty-six, under the guns

of Wesensö. Disguised as a fisherman, he spied out the innermost secrets of the strong castle of Marstrand—even to the important fact that the commandant had two mighty pretty daughters. Surprised ashore by a company of dragoons, his men ran off: as the horsemen galloped up, grabbing for his sword, he dashed between two, cut one down, raced to the shore, dived headlong into the surf, and swam safely to his boat, his sword between his teeth. He assaulted the fortifications of Strömstad, losing three hundred and forty-two men, but killing fifteen hundred Swedes. He cut out the largest of ten captured merchantmen from under the noses of three convoying Swedish ships of the line. In his thirty-gun frigate *White Eagle*, he chased the sixty-four-gun *Äsel* through the darkness, missing a chance to board, because his men wouldn't follow, berating the Swedish Captain Söstjerna (sea-star) for a coward, and shouting after him that his name should thenceforth be dog-star, not sea-star, but "all this," as he sorrowfully reported, "with much more that was worse, had no effect."

He became a portent, a legend of terror, a thing of witchcraft, to the Swedes. But he had the true warrior's respect for a gallant enemy.

Meeting Captain Bactman on the North Sea in a vessel bought for Sweden in England, twenty-eight guns to his eighteen, he gave battle about midday. Over twenty-six hours they stuck to it, blazing into each other for all they were worth. Twice the Swedish crew refused to fight any more; but Bactman was something of a bulldog himself: he couldn't get away from Wessel, so he drove his men back to the guns. By the afternoon of the second day, Wessel's powder had given out: he sent a messenger to the English captain, ex-

pressing his profound regrets that he could for this reason no longer entertain him, but inviting him to come aboard and shake hands on it.

Bactman declined with thanks. The ships drifted so close that Wessel could hail through his speaking-trumpet—whereat he shouted across a suggestion that if the other would only lend him some powder, they could resume the argument.

This didn't suit the Englishman either. So the two drank each other's health from their respective quarter-decks, while the crews manned the wreckage of the yards and cheered wildly.

In spite of constant attacks from enemies at home who envied his sudden rise, Wessel at twenty-six became admiral of the North Sea fleet. He had always gone his own way. He didn't hesitate to refuse to obey orders, answering once that "the biggest fool can see that to obey would defeat all my plans. I shall not do it." Frederik made him a nobleman under the resounding title of Thunder-shield (*Tordenskjöld*).

"By the powers," exclaimed this sea-dog when the news came, "I shall thunder in the ears of the Swedes so that the King shall hear of it."

The chance came soon, when he made history, and saved his country.

The Swede had one hand on Norway in January, 1716. His veterans besieged the key city of the land. Reinforcements were to come under protection of the whole Swedish fleet of forty-four ships, awaiting its chance in the harbor of Dynekilen. Thunder-shield, with his *White Eagle* frigate and six smaller vessels, was scouting for the Danish admiral along the Kattegat outside.

The harbor was two miles long, and in places only

four or five hundred feet across. The channel was tortuous, twisting about between rocks and reefs. A strong battery commanded it, half-way up. The Swedish officers feeling perfectly secure in this well-guarded stronghold, had arranged to attend a grand wedding on shore the following day.

When Tordenskjöld's quick eye and alert brain had put the facts together, he conceived a supreme audacity.

If that fleet could be destroyed, Norway was safe. The love of his country burned in him with true Norse fervor. The staggering odds simply added zest. There was no time to consult the admiral—for which he was doubtless profoundly thankful.

His standing orders were, however, to hold a council of war in any emergency, and abide by the majority's decision.

So he held his council: that is to say, he put the *White Eagle* at daybreak alongside of his companion little frigate, the *Vindhunden* (wind-dog).

Hailing her captain, he called out:

"The Swedish officers are invited to a wedding, but they have forgotten us—shall we go unasked?"

"Good enough," shouted back stanch Captain Grip.

"The wind is fair and we have all day. I'm ready."

The war council having thus deliberated, Tordenskjöld set the signal for action, and boldly stood into the harbor at the head of his half-dozen midgets.

The batteries of the fort gave them a hot reception when they came within range. Four thousand soldiers along the shore concentrated their musketry-fire on them. The war-ships, hastily made ready when the alarm came, added their broadsides.

Not a gun was fired from the little squadron. Taking

it all as it came, the seven worked up the narrow channel till they reached a place wide enough for them to come about with their broadsides to the foe.

Then they cut loose with all the metal they had. And so desperately and accurately did they work the fifty guns they could bring to bear on this great fleet, that after three hours the Swedish fire began to slacken a bit.

The whole harbor was shrouded in smoke. The Swedes, sticking to their places in the inner harbor, taken aback by the impudence and energy of their puny assailants, became panicky.

Suddenly, to their utter amazement, they saw these vicious wasps loom up through the gray pall, right alongside: Tordenskjöld had risked everything on a surprise dash under cover of the smoke.

His broadsides crashed into the big Swedish hulks. Overcome by the unexpected assault, terrorized by the reputation of this mad Norseman, the sailors fled from their guns; the soldiers on shore dropped their weapons and ran. The great fleet, in its own strong harbor, was surrendered to a twentieth of its force.

Swooping down on the battery, Thunder-shield captured it and spiked the guns. The way was now open for the really big job: for he had made up his mind to annihilate that fleet. What couldn't be carried off must be burned or sunk.

It was almost ludicrous to see these indomitable little vixens, harnessed to line-of-battle ships, and towing them out as a child leads a cluster of toy boats by strings. Tordenskjöld hauled on ropes like any sailor-man, shouted instructions, cheered on his men, who worked like demons.

The ashamed Swedes returned to the battle, volley-

ing with their muskets from the shore. Thunder-shield's exultant sailors only pulled the harder.

One of the captured ships caught on fire. Lieutenant Tönder, in spite of his wooden leg, hastened aboard to take charge. The quartermaster who had been in command ran up crying that there were two hundred barrels of powder below, and that the ship would blow up in a second or two.

Tönder grabbed the man by the collar as he tried to jump overboard, and stumped along aft with him to the magazine. The blaze was sputtering along a carefully laid fuse to an open powder-barrel a few inches away. Coolly seizing the fuse, the lieutenant smothered it in his hand and tossed it through a port-hole.

The squadron ahead towed away. The captured ships moved behind them.

When night fell, the Swedish fleet no longer existed. Thirteen the seven had destroyed, thirty-one they bore off to fly the Danish flag. Enormous stores of war were captured. Tordenskjöld had lost not a single vessel, and but seventy-six men killed and wounded. It was a battle such as history can hardly parallel.

The Swede gave up his invasion, and returned to his native land growling. Norway breathed freely once more.

While of infinitely less importance, one more story must be related of this reincarnated berserker. It has been well told by an American of Danish descent.

"The most extraordinary of all his adventures befell when, after the attack on Strömstad, he was hastening home to Copenhagen.

"Crossing the Kattegat in a little smack that carried but two three-pound guns, he was chased and overtaken by a Swedish frigate of sixteen guns and a crew

of sixty men. Tordenskjöld had but twenty-one, and eight of them were servants and non-combatants. They were dreadfully frightened, and tradition has it that one of them wept when he saw the Swede coming on. Her captain called upon him to surrender, but the answer was flung back:

“‘I am Tordenskjöld! Come and take me if you can.’

“With that came a tiny broadside that did brisk execution on the frigate. Tordenskjöld had hauled both of his guns over on the ‘fighting side’ of his vessel. There ensued such a battle as Homer would have liked to sing. Both sides banged away for all they were worth. In the midst of the din and smoke Tordenskjöld used his musket with cool skill; his servants loaded while he fired. At every shot a man fell on the frigate.

“Word was brought that there was no more round shot. He bade them twist up his pewter dinner-service and fire that, which they did.

“The Swede tried vainly to board. Tordenskjöld manœuvred his smack with such skill that they could not hook on. Seeing this, Captain Lind, commanding the frigate, called to him to desist from the useless struggle; he would be honored to carry such a prisoner into Göteborg. Back came the taunt:

“‘Neither you nor any other Swede shall ever carry me there.’

“And with that he shot the captain down.

“When his men saw him fall, they were seized with panic and made off as quickly as they could, while Tordenskjöld’s crew, of whom only fourteen were left, beat their drums and blew trumpets in frantic defiance.

“Their captain was for following the Swede and

boarding her, but he could not. Sails, rigging, and masts were shot to pieces.

"Perhaps the terror of the Swedes was increased by the sight of Tordenskjöld's tame bear making faces at them behind its master. It went with him everywhere till that day, and came out of the fight unscathed.

"During the night the crew ran the vessel on the Swedish shore, whence Tordenskjöld himself reached Denmark in an open boat which he had to keep bailing all night, for the boat was shot full of holes, and though he and his companions stuffed their spare clothing into them, it leaked badly.

"The enemy got the smack, after all, and the bear, being a Norwegian, proved so intractable on Swedish soil, that, sad to relate, in the end they cut him up and ate him."

Two weeks after his thirtieth birthday, this head-long, unbeatable, broad-shouldered, blue-eyed, modern sea-jarl was killed in a duel, into which he had been urged by treacherous friends.

His best epitaph is the cry which used to resound in his deep voice when things were hottest, whether in storm or battle:

"Hi, *now* we are having a fine time!"

He loved the tough jobs, this Thunder-shield.

CHAPTER XXVIII

"ENGAGE THE ENEMY CLOSER!"

IF one had to name a single man to represent England as triumphant mistress of the seas there could be little hesitation in selecting Horatio Nelson. He began his career as a shy, sickly boy, twelve years old, aboard the battleship *Raisonné*. At twenty-one he was a post captain. He lost an eye at the siege of Calvi, an arm in the expedition against Teneriffe. Though his headlong valor had received no special recognition, he had become known to his immediate superiors as one who "could not be spared, either as captain or admiral."

For there was ever something in Nelson which flared up like a charge of explosives in the face of danger.

As a boy at school he had himself let down by sheets one night in order to raid a pear-orchard—and then gave all the fruit away, explaining that he only went because "all the other fellows were afraid."

Going into action against a superior French force in 1794, he wrote his wife: "The lives of all are in the hand of Him who knows best whether to preserve mine or not; my character and good name are in my own keeping."

They were in good hands. The dark cloud of Napoleon's conquering ambition rose over Europe. Those were gloomy days for England when the news of each successive conquest on the Continent made it probable that her turn would come next. Then in 1798 Nelson

came upon the French fleet, which he had long been seeking, moored in battle array in Aboukir Bay. He had worked out his plans to cover every contingency: “First gain the victory, and then make the best use of it you can.” There seemed no doubt in his mind. “That we shall succeed is certain,” he declared: “who may live to tell the story, is a very different question.” And he told his officers on the preceding night: “Before this time to-morrow, I shall have gained a peerage, or Westminster Abbey.”

With such a leader the attack was irresistible. The French fleet was all but annihilated, only four vessels escaping; among their losses was the huge one-hundred-and-twenty-gun *Orient* which caught fire and blew up with an explosion which for a while stopped the battle. (The ten-year-old son of her commodore, Casa-Bianca, was the boy who “stood on the burning deck,” familiar to every English-speaking child through Felicia Hemans’s poem.) Nelson was terribly wounded but refused aid till his turn came.

It was one of the most complete victories in naval history. The conqueror became Baron Nelson of the Nile. Honors were showered upon him from Sultan, Czar, Kings, and his own Parliament. From that hour he was the idol of the English people, who felt he had saved the country from Bonaparte.

But though he was everywhere hailed as the deliverer of the world, there was plenty of stern work ahead. Napoleon’s conquests on land spread wider and wider. In 1801 Baron Nelson became a viscount in memory of the glorious victory of Copenhagen, where he refused to see his superior’s signal to retreat, looking at the flag-ship with his blind eye and ordering to be nailed to the mast his own signal: “Engage the enemy closer!”

Three years later Spain joined France. The viscount was no more able to stay ashore at this crisis than Captain Nelson had been. October, 1805, saw him in command of a fleet off Cape Trafalgar, near Cadiz, awaiting the combined forces of France and Spain under Admiral Villeneuve, "the sooner the better. The success no man can insure; but for the fighting them, if they can be got at, I pledge myself."

At daybreak of the 21st the enemy came in sight, thirty-three ships of the line and seven frigates, formed in close battle order.

Nelson's plan of attack had been carefully outlined to Admiral Collingwood and the other officers. As usual his main insistence was on "a close and decisive action." "In case signals cannot be seen or clearly understood," ran the order, "no captain can be wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy."

That was the true Nelson touch.

There was a light breeze from the west. When Villeneuve's fleet was a few miles to leeward, the English force bore down upon them in two lines, Nelson leading one in the *Victory*, Collingwood the remaining thirteen in the *Royal Sovereign*. After some skilful manœuvring, the French admiral formed a double line of battle on the larboard tack, having brought the shoals under the British lee, and kept the port of Cadiz open for himself.

But Nelson was not thinking of the chances of defeat. He turned to Captain Blackwood and asked what he would consider a victory.

Blackwood replied that considering the enemy's strength, evident determination, and excellent seamanship, it would be magnificent if he could account for fourteen out of the forty vessels.

“I shall not be satisfied with less than twenty,” replied Nelson positively.

He watched the opposing line a few moments.

“Do you not think there is a signal wanting?” he asked.

“It seems to me,” said Blackwood, “that the whole fleet understands very clearly what it is about.”

The admiral turned and gave an order. A new signal snapped into place at the masthead:

“England expects every man to do his duty.”

Not a man in the fleet but tingled with an extra tautness of resolve as he read that message across the waters. A great shout went up from ship after ship. They were ready and anxious.

Nelson was in full dress—his long, blue admiral’s frock coat, with the glittering stars of four orders on his breast. It was known that the enemy had four thousand troops on board, including many picked Tyrolese sharpshooters. Indeed, these riflemen could be seen clustered in the tops. The viscount was so conspicuous a mark, and his fame made the French so particularly anxious to remove him, that his officers were much disturbed. It had been hinted before that prudence demanded he should remove his coat or cover up his stars, but he had answered: “In honor I gained them, and in honor I will die with them.”

All knew that further suggestion along this line was useless. But Blackwood and the *Victory*’s captain, Hardy, urged that it was most important to the general success for the flag-ship to keep out of action as long as possible, that the fleet might have Nelson’s directing mind.

The logic of this was irresistible. But there was that in Nelson’s heart still less to be resisted. He con-

sented to let the order be given for the *Leviathan* and the *Téméraire* to pass ahead—but instead of shortening sail on the *Victory*, without which the order could not be obeyed, he pressed her forward as fast as canvas would carry her.

Erect on the quarter-deck, his lips compressed, his eyes seeming to dart out flashes in his excitement, he watched the space lessen between his two lines and the hostile three-deckers.

Meanwhile, in the face of that imposing armament, the sailors laughed and joked over what a fine show those brave ships would make at Spithead.

At ten minutes to twelve the enemy opened fire. Eight or nine of the ships immediately ahead of the *Victory* tried out the range with single guns.

Seeing that the shot passed over him, Nelson at once sent Blackwood and Captain Prowse to their respective frigates, bidding them tell the other commanders he depended on their efforts. He repeated that if they could not get into action immediately by the official plan of battle to adopt any means of coming to close quarters without delay.

Hoisting his favorite signal to “Engage closer!” he headed into the conflict.

His course was a couple of points farther north than Collingwood’s, in order to cut off any escape to Cadiz. The leeward fleet consequently came first in touch with the enemy.

Nelson was afire with eagerness as he saw the *Royal Sovereign* cut through the centre of the opposing line astern of the *Santa Anna* and pour a broadside into the three-decker at shot range.

“See how that noble fellow Collingwood carries his ship into action!” he cried.

At the same instant the exultant Collingwood was exclaiming to his captain: "What would Nelson give to be here!"

The *Victory* stood on. The admiral had hoisted several flags, lest one be shot away; but Villeneuve's fleet showed no colors.

When the French saw that one of their shot passed through her maintopgallantsail, they let fly a volley at her rigging, hoping to cripple her before she could close.

Nelson steered for the largest thing in sight, the *Santissima Trinidad*, "an old acquaintance" of his, which he recognized by her four decks.

Scott, his secretary, fell dead. A double-headed shot wiped out eight marines. A ball passed between Nelson and Hardy and a splinter tore off the latter's buckle. Each thought the other wounded. "Too warm work to last long," smiled Nelson. In ten minutes fifty men had been killed or disabled. The flagship's maintopmast, booms, and studding-sails had been shot away. The "warm work" was getting hotter every moment.

Still the *Victory's* guns were silent. Still her men stood to quarters, with a cool courage never surpassed. Still she held straight for the enemy. Still the signal floated: "Engage closer!"

They reached the enemy's van. Passing down the line in an effort to break through, the word was given. The gun crews changed suddenly from statues to frenzied avengers. The cannon spoke with one great voice—and spoke again; and those in front knew only too well what they said.

It became clear they must run aboard one of the foe to break the line.

"Which one would you prefer, sir?" inquired Captain Hardy, as calmly as if he were carving a chicken.

"Take your pick," said the admiral. "It doesn't signify much."

"Port your helm!" called Hardy.

Round veered the grim battleship till she headed for the *Redoubtable*.

The latter received her with a broadside, then hastily closed her lower-deck ports, lest she be boarded through them. Nor did she again fire a great gun during the conflict; but the riflemen in her tops were still in the fight. Just as her tiller-ropes were shot away, the *Victory* ran into her opponent. Harvey in the *Téméraire* (that *Téméraire* painted by Turner) swung aboard on the other side, and a Frenchman ranged alongside the *Téméraire*.

Here then were these four ships in "as compact a tier as if they had been moored together, their heads lying all the same way," thundering their heavy shot into each other's vitals with the muzzles of the guns almost touching.

The *Victory's* gunners had to depress their pieces and lessen the charges lest they fire through the *Redoubtable* into their own *Téméraire* on the other side. The larboard guns had no such trouble, and they beat a devil's tattoo upon both the *Santissima Trinidad* and the *Bucentaure*, Villeneuve's flag-ship.

On the starboard side a fireman with a bucket of water stood by each piece. When the lower-deck guns were run out the muzzles touched the *Redoubtable's* sides; and, to prevent fire, after each shot this bucket of water was dashed into the gaping hole!

Twice Nelson ordered his men to cease firing on this side, thinking the *Redoubtable*, which flew no colors,

had surrendered, because her great guns were silent. An hour after the *mêlée* began, a rifle-ball from the Frenchman's mizzentop, only fifty feet from where he stood, struck him on the left shoulder.

He fell upon his face in a pool of blood.

Hardy, who had shouted a warning too late, ran to the spot. Three men raised the admiral.

"They've done for me at last, Hardy," said he.

Nevertheless, as he was carried down the ladder, he gave orders to have new tiller-ropes rigged in place of those shot away; and to prevent being seen by the crew, he covered his face and stars with a handkerchief.

He bade the surgeons leave him and attend to others, for, he declared, "you can do nothing for me."

But not even the agony he suffered could take his mind from the battle which raged above. Whenever a ship struck—the *Redoubtable* surrendered twenty minutes after Nelson was hit—the crew of the *Victory* burst into cheering, and at each of these huzzas his face lit up with pride and delight. He sent repeated messages to Captain Hardy, being unable to restrain his impatience for first-hand information. But the fight was too desperate for the latter to leave the deck.

At last, after an endless hour's wait, the captain came. He pressed his admiral's hand in silence.

"How goes the day with us?"

"Very well," replied Hardy. "Ten ships have struck, but five of the van have tacked and seem to be bearing down on the *Victory*. I have called two or three of our fresh ships round, and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing."

"I hope none of our ships have struck?"

"There was no fear of that."

"I am a dead man, Hardy. I am going fast."

With a few more words, the captain hastened back on deck.

Fifty minutes later, he returned. The battle was on but it was a complete and magnificent victory: at least fourteen or fifteen of the enemy's ships were sunk already.

"That's well, but I bargained for twenty," said Nelson resolutely.

He still gave orders, commanding the captain to anchor, as had been planned.

But his span was lessening rapidly. A little later he said:

"Now I am satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty."

The last words were repeated several times. Then his brave spirit was released.

Trafalgar shattered the French naval power: the twenty captures Nelson had demanded were taken; others went down in a storm; only four escaped. The war was virtually ended on the ocean.

But there was no joy in England, in spite of her celebration of the victory. For she felt the price paid had been all too great. And many a man vowed the island-empire were safer with Nelson and threatened by the enemies' utmost power, than without him even when the hostile fleets had been annihilated.

That, I fancy, is the highest tribute ever paid by a nation to one brave man.

CHAPTER XXIX

"I'M JUST BEGINNING TO FIGHT"

ONE raw February day in 1779 a man in uniform stood on the dock at L'Orient, a little town on the north-west coast of France, where the government still maintains a minor shipyard and naval station. He was short and slender, with black hair and swarthy face, and wore his well-fitting blue-and-yellow coat with the air of a man of fashion. But there was an incongruous solidity and hint of muscular power about his neck and shoulders that bespoke unusual strength. A boxing expert would have picked him out at a glance as an "awkward customer" for his size.

But it was this naval officer's eyes that would have specially held a bystander's attention: for there was in their black depths a fierce intentness which seized upon every detail of the vessel lying moored before him.

This ship was an old East India merchantman, of about a thousand tons, which had been converted into an armed transport. She was now to undergo another "sea-change" on her path to immortality.

This well-dressed and alert person was John Paul Jones, holding a commission as captain in the infant navy of the revolting American colonies. His appointment had been part of the same resolution which adopted, on June 14, 1777, the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the thirteen United States of America. He himself had declared: "That flag and I are twins. . . . We cannot be parted in life or in death. So long as

we can float, we shall float together. If we must sink, we shall go down as one!" Flying this new emblem, he had crowded the *Ranger*, through November gales and snow-squalls, across the ocean, bearing the tremendous news of Burgoyne's surrender—which decided wavering France to make, on February 6, 1778, the alliance that assured American independence. A week later, as his little ship entered the harbor at Brest, he had procured the first salute by a foreign fleet to this "new constellation." In April he had surprised the world by showing that an English war-ship could be made to strike its colors to an equal or inferior foe—capturing the *Drake* after an hour's "pure and simple broadsiding at close range." For generations all nations had accepted as an axiom the fact that England afloat was invincible: when Paul Jones brought the captive *Drake* into Brest harbor, he shattered this tradition at one blow, and caused such a sensation throughout Europe as is hard to appreciate to-day.

Yet he had been waiting for eight weary months, despite his centring efforts for a fresh command. The promised *Indien*, built secretly for America at Amsterdam, had been lost through treachery and the consequent protests of the English Government to neutral Holland. The French authorities had kept him dangling in suspense, apparently trying to force him into privateering. But Paul Jones was determined to give the world a new idea of that new flag, his "twin." So he had persisted in the face of every discouragement, suppressing his impatience and indignation. Only the unprecedented step of a personal letter to Louis XVI, and the intervention at court of his patroness, the Duchess of Chartres, had finally cut the web of delay and subterfuge. To his delight, the Minister of

Marine had just placed under his command the ship *Le Duras*, at L'Orient. With a much needed advance of ten thousand louis (equal to one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars) from "that more than royal woman" to whose grace he felt he owed all, he had hastened to examine this new flag-bearer, in which he must carry out the ambitious plans so long seething in his mind.

She was not a prepossessing flag-ship. Slow, clumsy—especially when close to the wind—and pretty well worn out by her twelve years of hard merchant service, she hardly seemed like the craft in which to harry English commerce in home waters and defy the might of the British navy.

But this thirty-two-year-old captain, who was "only restless when at peace" and "always fought as if that was what he was made for," was now concerned merely as to how to make the best of what he had, and set resolutely to work at this problem. He turned the old steerage into a lower gun-deck, planning to cut six more ports on each side for eighteen-pounders; but he could get only six guns, and those from a lot condemned as unfit. So he was forced to make shift with these. Then he mounted twenty-eight long twelves on the main gun-deck, and eight long nines on the quarter-deck, discarding the sixes of her old battery. These changes gave him a fair equivalent of a thirty-six-gun frigate; but though he "exhausted every endeavor to hurry them," it was three months before the alterations were finished, and the new spars, rigging, and sails fitted.

Meanwhile he had been scraping together a crew, mostly of leavings, for the French had been earnestly recruiting for their own ships. Including officers,

there were fifty Americans; the rest were a nondescript lot of British prisoners, Portuguese, and French fishermen—with one hundred and twenty-two French soldiers who were allowed to volunteer. The last were needed, not only for projected descents upon the English coast, but to keep this motley band in order.

At last, on June 19, Jones put to sea, his colors at the peak of his remodelled flag-ship, which he had christened *Bonhomme Richard* in honor of his faithful friend Franklin and his "Poor Richard's Almanac." Nominally he was in command of a squadron, the thirty-six gun *Alliance*, the *Pallas*, thirty-two, and the little twelve-gun brig *Vengeance* sailing with him. But at the last moment he was forced, by the acquiescence of the American commissioners, to sign articles which destroyed his authority and made these captains "colleagues" who were free to use their own judgment. Most men would have refused such a dangerous and humiliating position when facing so desperate a venture. Jones protested. But he had ever taken Benjamin Franklin's counsel as final, and not even this unprecedented absurdity could hold him back. Its effects were speedily apparent, for Pierre Landais, commanding the *Alliance*, was a half-crazy adventurer, cashiered from the French navy, who had imposed on the American Government; and his insubordinate bad faith menaced the expedition from the start.

The second day out from L'Orient the *Alliance* fouled the *Bonhomme Richard*—a sample of Landais's helpfulness throughout the cruise. Both vessels were so damaged that there was nothing for it but to put back to port, and spend another six weeks in repairs.

As it happened, this disgraceful occurrence was a blessing in disguise. An exchange of prisoners had

taken place just after the squadron left. A hundred and nineteen American seamen now arrived at Nantes from British hulks and jails. Jones hastened thither and enlisted every one except five who were too crippled to serve, paying their expenses out of the funds sent him by the Duchess of Chartres. He also picked up twenty more American sailors at Nantes. Though many of these captives were in sad physical condition, they formed an invaluable reinforcement. They had seen service in the *Lexington* and in various privateers, and included such officers as Richard Dale, John Mayrant, Nathaniel Fanning, and a dozen others who were to play star parts in the coming drama.

So, with the Americans on his own ship increased to one hundred and fifty, and with full crews on all, Paul Jones got way in early August for his cruise about the British Isles. He had a very definite notion of what he wanted to do. Writing to his friend Joseph Hewes, he pointed out that while the capture of the *Drake* had been "a new experience for the English and a new lesson for other nations," it was after all only a little fight between small ships.

"But now, with the force I have, ill assorted as it is and hampered as it may be by the untoward conditions I have already confided to you, I can, if fortune favors me, fight a much more impressive battle.

"With this in view, I should not deem it a misfortune if I fell in with a ship of the enemy superior enough in force to make the taking of her an event of more than ordinary note."

That is, he was bent upon giving the new flag a definite and grim significance to the enemy. In an overworked slang phrase, he meant to "put the stripes" into it.

For nearly six weeks little happened. They took several prizes, the richest of which were lost by the disobedience of Landais. Indeed, this scoundrel lost no chance to assert his independence and contempt of the commander, so that Jones stopped sending him direct orders, as they brought only insults. Over and over, till the hour of his final treason, the conduct of this man was such as would in any navy have brought him before a court martial for mutiny; but the commodore's hands were tied by the articles he had been compelled to sign; he could only hold to his own course and ignore these demoralizing acts, sorely as he chafed at the way in which they limited his scope of action.

On the *Bonhomme Richard* there was no doubt as to who had charge. Long before these forty days were ended, the captain had inspired his men with a personal devotion which made them a fit instrument for the coming work.

"I sailed in my time with many captains," declared Henry Gardner; "but with only one Paul Jones. . . . He always knew every officer or man in his crew as one friend knows another. Those big, black eyes would look right through a new man at first sight. At any rate, he dealt with each according to his notion. I have seen him one hour teaching the French language to his midshipmen and the next hour showing an apprentice how to knot a 'Turk's head' or make a neat coil-down of a painter. . . . Any ship Paul Jones commanded was full of him, himself, all the time."

Very strict, even about the way a sailor walked, he was still the best of comrades. "If you heard peals of laughter from the fo'c'sle, it was likely that he was spinning funny yarns for Jack off watch. If you heard roars of merriment at the cabin table, it was likely that

his never-failing wit had overwhelmed the officers' mess."

Contrary to the universal custom, he abominated flogging. He had once seen a poor chap "flogged round the fleet" at Port Royal. The man died under the lash, and Paul Jones and the cat-o'-nine-tails parted company from that moment.

"I tell you, men," said he, "once for all, that when I become convinced a sailor of mine must be killed, I won't leave it to be done by boatswains' mates under slow torture of the lash. I'll do it myself—and so d—d quick that it will make your heads swim!"

This combination of good fellow and strict disciplinarian, who knew what was what and insisted on getting it, the best boxer on board, "quicker than chain lightning" but amazingly strong, who went into action as if he were asking a lady to dance, and got more cheerful as things got hotter—this was the sort of leader for whom men die gladly. Long before that fateful September day, the crew of the *Bonhomme Richard* would have tackled a seventy-four if he had given the word.

On the afternoon of the 23d, the *Richard* and the *Pallas* (under Captain Cottineau) were ten or twelve miles off Flamboro' when they sighted the Baltic fleet, which they had been hoping to intercept. Forty vessels, loaded with indispensable lumber and stores for English shipyards, offered the chance for a real blow; but the miserable Landais, who had been apprised of the rendezvous, did nothing, though he had a perfect opportunity to get among these easy prizes. When the two convoying war-ships stood out between the merchantmen and the Americans, there was nothing for the latter but to give up their quarry and prepare for

a different but no less welcome kind of activity. Commodore Jones bade Cottineau attend to the smaller vessel, a big sloop, while he himself hauled up the *Richard*, to work to windward of the frigate.

The breeze was offshore and very light. It was nearly sundown when Jones reached the desired position between the enemy and the shore. Long before then the Britisher had been minutely scanned. She was a new forty-four, only off the stocks six months, the *Serapis*, commanded by Captain Richard Pearson. About the same size as the *Richard*, she threw a full broadside of three hundred and fifteen pounds. The American ship had a nominal broadside of two hundred and fifty-eight pounds, but, as soon appeared, those condemned eighteen-pounders made an actual reduction in effective metal which gave an advantage of fifty per cent to the *Serapis*.

It was a quarter past seven when the two antagonists found themselves abeam, a cable's length (six hundred feet) apart. The full moon made the scene light enough in that latitude. The *Pallas* was chasing the sloop to leeward. The *Alliance*, disregarding the commodore's signals, was hull down astern.

Captain Pearson had hailed once as the ships neared each other. Receiving no answer, he put down his night-glasses, turned to his ship's surgeon, and remarked: "It is probably Paul Jones, doctor. If so, there is work ahead."

He hailed again. This time a reply came in the form of a broadside. The *Serapis* cut loose almost at the same instant. One of the most renowned sea-duels of all times was on.

The two ships worked northward for twenty minutes, about as fast as a man would walk ashore, giving



The fight between the *Bonhomme Richard* and the *Serapis*

each other all they had. In spite of splendid marksmanship on the *Richard*, the advantage was all with her opponent. Not only was her battery heavier to begin with: two of the *Richard's* condemned eighteen-pounders burst at the first fire, blowing up the main gun-deck, wounding and scorching Mayrant, who was in charge, killing most of the gunners, and causing such demoralization that this heaviest battery had to be abandoned, since even such stanch fellows could not be expected to work cannon that did more damage backward than forward.

In consequence, the lower guns of the *Serapis*, splendidly served, made havoc aboard her foe, hulling her relentlessly, putting several of her twelve-pounders out of commission, and almost overwhelming her gunners with the hail of shot and splinters.

Pearson tried to luff across his enemy's bows and rake her; but the wind, veering to the west, prevented this; so, fearing he might be grappled and boarded, and finding the musketry-fire from the *Richard's* tops and upper decks much heavier than his own, he fell off to leeward again.

Commodore Jones managed to cast grapnels into the mizzen-backstays of the *Serapis* as his jib-boom scraped her rigging; but the lines parted and the ships separated once more. It was clear as day that the *Richard* was overmatched in cannon: the only chance was to come to close quarters.

Henry Gardner, a gunner on the American ship, gives a vivid picture of conditions at this time (eight o'clock):

"As soon as the ships could bring their guns to bear again after separating, the fire of both was renewed; the enemy's as heavy and destructive as before, but ours much weaker. In fact, but little of our starboard

broadside was left. Of the fourteen twelve-pounders in it at the beginning, nine were either dismounted or smashed by the eighteen-pound shot of the enemy's lower tier, or else so jammed through the wreckage of the port openings from the same cause as to be unserviceable. Of the hundred and forty-odd officers and men stationed in the main gun-deck battery at the beginning, more than half—at least eighty—were killed or wounded. The whole deck was slippery with blood and littered with fragments of heads, bodies, and limbs.

"It was clear to every one that at this rate the end could not be far off; and, besides, it was known that many of the enemy's eighteen-pound shot had pierced our hull between wind and water, so that there was already at least three or four feet of water in the hold, and rapidly gaining. From the gun-deck itself, looking outport, we could see that the port-sills were much nearer the water's surface than at the beginning, showing that the ship had already sunk at least two feet from her natural trim. Yet, despite this wreck and carnage, I could not see that any of our remaining men were disposed to flinch, or that the five guns we had left were worked with any less will than at the start.

"Just at this time the commodore came down on the gun-deck and said to Mr. Dale, who was at the moment near me:

"'Dick, his metal is too heavy for us at this business. He is hammering us all to pieces. We must close with him; we must get hold of him! Be prepared at any moment to abandon this deck and bring what men you have left on the spar-deck—and give them the small arms for boarding when you come up.'

"Having said this to Mr. Dale, the commodore re-

turned to the upper decks, and in a few minutes the cutlasses, pistols, and some pikes and muskets were served out to us and we went above, except a few left to guard the hatches under which the prisoners were confined. . . .

"The worst carnage of all was on number two gun of the forward starboard division. From the first broadside till the gun-deck was abandoned, nineteen different men were on this gun, and at the end but one of her original crew remained. That was our little Indian, Anthony Jeremiah; or, as his messmate nickname was, 'Red Jerry'—generally pronounced by the crew 'Red Cherry.' He was 'port-fire' (that is, handled the slow-match) throughout.

"When the gun-deck was abandoned and we went above, Jerry joined Mayrant's boarding-party."

There followed an anxious period. It was a case of grapple or defeat—and to grapple, the *Richard* must get way enough to cross her enemy's bows. She wore off, effectually blanketing the other, her gun-deck silent, only three light pieces on the quarter-deck working, while the devastating broadsides of the *Serapis* poured in more frightfully than ever.

It was the supreme moment of the battle. Should the *Serapis* get clear, able to fight at longer range, it was a case of speedy sinking or surrender.

At this very crisis, with every straining eye watching the movements of the two vessels, with the tense boarding-party crouched hopefully, as their ship slowly drew ahead and in front—the unspeakable Landais sailed up in the *Alliance*, hove to about a quarter of a mile to windward, and fired two broadsides. The flag-ship was directly between him and the enemy, so that he could not possibly touch the latter without firing through

his consort. In point of fact, the *Richard* received the full effect of at least one of these broadsides. The *Alliance* then sailed away out of gunshot.

It was useless to speculate whether this amazing attack from his own side was due to treachery or insanity. The fact still remained that the American ship must board or be defeated. To add to her troubles, just as she caught a fresh puff of wind and her bowsprit began to push across the line of the almost motionless *Serapis*, heavy shot carried away her wheel and shattered her rudder. But for the forethought of the commodore in rigging at L'Orient an extra emergency tiller, it would have been all up with her, since she could not have been steered into the necessary position.

Pearson saw plainly how threatening was his opponent's manœuvre. He threw his sails aback in a final effort to get clear. But the other rounded so close that his stern swung to leeward. Although the *Serapis* began to gather a little stern-way, the American nosed alongside until his mizzen-rigging caught in a fluke of the starboard anchor.

Two of the stays pulled loose. The third held. Paul Jones, calling to his French orderly, Pierre Gerard, to pass lashings, leaped through the quarter-deck ports and with his own hands lashed anchor and stays together, doubling the line over the fluke to make sure of holding.

The two ships stopped. They swung apart. The bonds held, and they settled together again. They were fast in the death-grip.

The commodore hove the slack in through a port.

"Aha, Pierre my boy, that's something like it. At last I have him. *Sacré nom de Dieu*, he shan't escape again!"

His cocked hat had gone overboard. A midshipman ran for another. "Never mind the hat, West," laughed Jones. "I'll fight this out in my scalp. I've a mind to peel my coat, too. And if I could, I'd fight in the buff, like the gun-deck hearties."

He hurried back to the quarter-deck, where the French marines were beginning to show some discouragement. Their captain and two lieutenants were among the wounded, and the twenty or so remaining were becoming disordered.

Jones rallied them in a voice of thunder and cheered them on with "such imprecations upon the enemy as I never before or since heard in French or any other language," says one of the sharpshooters, who was in the maintop fifty feet over his commander's head.

By this time there was practically nothing left of the *Richard's* batteries except three nine-pounders on the quarter-deck. Below, beams, knees, and planking were being smashed in by the devastating balls. The gun-deck, fore and aft, was untenable. The water was gaining rapidly in the hold. The flag had been shot away, and trailed astern in the water by the hal-yards.

One man lost his nerve amid this overwhelming destruction. At ten o'clock, Arthur Randall, the gunner, set up a cry for quarter.

Pearson heard the call from his quarter-deck. No flag could be seen.

"Have you struck your colors?" he called.

"No!" shouted back Jones. "I'm just beginning to fight!"

"This," said the English captain afterward, "I at first thought to be mere bravado on his part. But I soon perceived it was the defiance of a man desperate

enough, if he could not conquer, to sink with his ship alongside."

The French captain of marines counselled surrender. But the American tars were one with their leader.

"Hey, old trump!" sung out the commodore to old Jack Robinson beside him. "What do you say to quitting?"

"There's a shot left in the locker, sir," growled Jack. They soon showed this was no idle boast.

The commodore's aim now was to clear the enemy's exposed decks, leaving his sheltered big guns below to do their worst. He exhorted his marines to cool accuracy. Repeatedly grabbing a musket, he would take careful aim and bring down his man as an object-lesson. "In fact, toward the very last, he had about him a group of half a dozen marines who did nothing but load their firelocks and hand them to the commodore, who fired them from his own shoulder, standing on the quarter-deck rail by the maintopmast-backstay."

Between this searching sharpshooting and the fire from the clustering riflemen aloft, the English upper decks became a region of sure and sudden death. One after another, eleven men were picked off at the wheel. The sailor who touched brace, sheet, or halyard, went down as if struck by lightning. A dozen times they attempted to cut loose the lashings; but this crucial bond was under Jones's special guard: volunteer after volunteer fell dead, hatchet in hand. And still the lashings held. And still the muskets annihilated everything that moved on deck. Moreover, the nine-pounders had cut the mainmast nearly in two.

Meanwhile the eighteen-pounders continued to hammer the unresisting lower half of the *Richard*. Pres-

ently the flash of the guns and the burning wads set fire to the splinters of the deserted gun-deck. The flames gained such headway that at one time they were within a few feet of the magazine. But each fresh peril was met as it arose. Lieutenant Dale and a few men actually held the fire under control by passing up buckets of water from the hold—"using the water that was sinking the ship to quench the flames that threatened to devour her."

Another man's nerves gave way. John Burbank, the master-at-arms, decided the ship was foundering and opened the orlop-hatch beneath which were two hundred English prisoners.

Fifty scrambled up. Commodore Jones levelled his pistol at Burbank's head and pulled the trigger. The weapon missed fire. Beating the man down with the butt, he ordered Midshipman Potter and a few men with cutlasses to hold the rest of the captives where they were.

"The ship alongside is sinking," said he to the bewildered group.

"It's this ship that sinks!" retorted a merchant captain.

"Man the pumps then, every one of you," commanded Jones.

Some started to obey. But the same fellow called to them: "Don't touch the pumps! Let the damned Yankee pirate sink!"

Orderly Gerard thrust forward his pistol.

"Obey the commodore!" said he.

The plucky Englishman grasped at the weapon—and fell lifeless to the deck. That ended the resistance, and Lieutenant Dale set them at the task of keeping the foundering *Richard* afloat a little longer.

Then came a piece of luck for the hard beset Americans. Jones ordered Gardner to try to drop hand-grenades down the enemy's hatch to the protected lower deck.

Several men lay out on the yard-arm, two carrying buckets of grenades, Gardner with the slow-match. The hatch cover had been slewed round by a shot, leaving a triangular opening of two feet at the widest part. The ships were rocking in the swell. It was a difficult mark. But Fanning, who was outboard, tossed his missiles as if he were pitching a game of baseball.

Twice he missed. The third grenade went through.

It happened that the English powder-monkeys had left piles of cartridges in the rear of the guns, some broken and with loose powder lying about. The explosion fired the whole train. Fifty men were killed or crippled, and the whole after section of this gun tier was silenced. Only strict discipline and their lieutenant's assurance that the *Richard* was going down could induce any of the gunners to resume their stations.

Once more the *Alliance* appeared on the scene. Running down to within a musket-shot of the combatants, she crossed the *Richard's* bows. Though repeatedly hailed, and ordered not to fire but to lay the enemy alongside, Landais raked both ships indiscriminately with grape, round, and bar shot, killing the master's mate and several men on the flag-ship. With this contribution he retired finally—fortunately for his colleagues.

All this time the boarding-party had been under the break of the quarter-deck, like hounds straining on the leash. Many of them were fresh from English hulks, and they made their cutlasses *swish* through the air in

zestful anticipation. Mayrant himself was a ghastly sight: against the black of his scorched face showed a terrible grape-shot wound—which had injured his skull so as to necessitate trepanning after the battle. But his South Carolina fighting-blood was so hot that the only difficulty was to hold him back.

At length the commodore decided the moment had come.

"Now's your time, John," he called. "Go in."

A hoarse yell went up. "Remember Portsea jail!" shouted Mayrant. With cocked pistol, he leaped on the rail.

In one dash he was over the nettings and down into the waist of the *Serapis*, his men close behind. As his feet hit the deck, an English sailor thrust him through the thigh with a pike. Mayrant shot him dead. The rush of the boarding-party was irresistible. In less time than it takes to tell it, they were masters of the forward half of the ship.

Captain Pearson had had enough. He grasped the ensign halyards. Down came the Cross of St. George and St. Andrew.

So great was the smoke and confusion, that the English gunners and American sharpshooters did not notice what had happened and continued shooting.

Mayrant, dripping blood, called back to Lieutenant Dale, who stood on the *Richard's* rail:

"He's struck; stop the firing. Come on board and take possession."

Dale swung himself down, grasped Mayrant's hand, and went off to the quarter-deck, where Captain Pearson stood.

"I have the honor, sir, to be the first lieutenant of the ship alongside, which is the American Continental ship

Bonhomme Richard, under command of Commodore Paul Jones. What ship is this?"

"His Britannic Majesty's late ship the *Serapis*, sir. And I am Captain Richard Pearson."

"Pardon me, sir; in the haste of the moment I forgot to inform you that my name is Richard Dale, and I must request you to pass on board the ship alongside."

The first lieutenant of the *Serapis* came up from below.

"Has the enemy struck, sir?" he inquired.

"No, sir; I have struck," replied Pearson.

"Then I will go below and order our men to cease firing," said the lieutenant.

"Pardon me, sir," interposed Dale; "I will attend to that. For yourself, please accompany Captain Pearson on board the ship alongside."

Paul Jones was waiting for them on the quarter-deck of what was left of his ship. He himself described the scene:

"Captain Pearson now confronted me, the image of chagrin and despair. He offered me his sword with a slight bow, but was silent. His first lieutenant followed suit. I was sorry for both of them, for they had fought their ship better and braver than any English ship was ever fought before, and this fortune of war came hard to them.

"I wanted to speak, but they were so sad and dignified in their silence I hardly knew what to say. Finally I mustered courage and said as I took the swords and handed them to Midshipman Potter at my elbow:

"Captain Pearson, you have fought heroically. You have worn this sword to your own credit and to

the honor of your service. I hope your sovereign will suitably reward you.'

"He bowed again, but made no reply; whereupon I requested him and his lieutenant to accompany Mr. Potter to my cabin."

Nathaniel Fanning, whose grenade had wrought such havoc, wrote in his journal:

"The battle was over, but by no means the trouble ended. The time was nearly midnight, but the full moon overhead in a cloudless sky made it almost as light as day.

"Captain Jones instantly began to survey his ship as soon as she drifted clear of the *Serapis*. He found that she had seven feet of water in her hold and was beginning to choke some of the pumps, though he had them double-manned by his English prisoners. She had already sunk so much that many shot-holes were below the water-line and could not be plugged.

"Meanwhile Dale and Mayrant occupied themselves on board the *Serapis* with silencing her lower-deck battery, from which at least two or three eighteen-pound shot were fired into, or rather through, the *Richard's* gun-deck after Captain Pearson and his lieutenant had reached her upper deck as prisoners. As soon as all firing was silenced and victory was complete, Jones ordered his men to cut the lashings that held the fluke of the *Serapis's* anchor in the *Richard's* mizzen-chains, and the ships at once drifted clear. The light wind that had prevailed during the battle died out and it fell dead calm.

"The condition of the *Richard* at this moment can hardly be imagined, much less described. Nearly sixty of her crew were stretched dead about her decks. More than a hundred and twenty others lay writhing

and gasping with desperate wounds, to which the good old surgeon, Doctor Laurens Brooke, unassisted as he was, could give but scant attention. About forty of her surviving or uninjured crew had followed Lieutenant Mayrant into the *Serapis*, and were in charge of the prize. Not more than one hundred remained to manage the *Richard* and to hold in check the two hundred or more prisoners. Nearly every twelve-pounder gun in the starboard broadside was dismounted or disabled. The starboard side of the ship, that had been in the wake of the *Serapis*'s lower tier, was simply driven in; so that but for a few frames, futtocks, and stanchions that still remained intact, the whole gun-deck would have fallen through. And even what the shot had spared, the flames were at this moment devouring.

"Such was the condition of the *Richard* when, sinking and on fire, she was still the conqueror and could by signal command the ship that had destroyed her! Nothing like this has ever been known in the annals of naval warfare. . . .

"The removal of the *Richard*'s wounded to the *Serapis* consumed much time; nearly all day, in fact, because the poor fellows had to be handled tenderly, and but three boats remained available. Fortunately it had now fallen dead calm and the sea was without a ripple. Had there been any wind or seaway, the *Richard* must have foundered immediately and the scene become one of unheard-of horror. However, the wounded were all transferred during the day, except two who died in the boats.

"The unwounded prisoners were his next care. Captain Cottineau took some of them into the *Pallas*; a few were put into the *Countess of Scarboro'*, Cottineau's prize; the rest went over to the *Serapis*.

Jones now told his crew to get on board the *Serapis*, retaining only a few of the *Pallas*'s crew in the *Richard*, and busied himself in saving the ship's papers. For his own part Jones saved only a few souvenirs from his feminine friends in Paris, his journal, and a bag of linen."

For the *Bonhomme Richard* was rapidly nearing the end of her brief, glorious career. The commodore writes in his journal:

"No one was now left aboard the *Richard* but our dead. To them I gave the good old ship for their coffin, and in her they found a sublime sepulchre. She rolled heavily in the long swell, her gun-deck awash to the port-sills, settled slowly by the head, and sank peacefully in about forty fathoms.

"The ensign gaff, shot away in the action, had been fished and put in place soon after firing ceased, and our torn and tattered flag was left flying when we abandoned her. As she plunged down by the head at the last, her taffrail momentarily rose in the air; so the very last vestige mortal eyes ever saw of the *Bonhomme Richard* was the defiant waving of her unconquered and unstricken flag as she went down."

CHAPTER XXX

THE FIRST VICTORY OF STEPHEN DECATUR

ONLY one who acted on the Biblical precept of turning the other cheek when smitten, only a passionate, professional, practising pacifist could find much satisfaction in the relations for twenty years between these United States and the Barbary pirates.

It is true that these corsairs of Morocco, Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis had for centuries been the scourge of Mediterranean commerce. (The adventures of John Foxe and of Cervantes in escaping from their prisons at the end of the sixteenth century have already been told in Part I.) It is true that at the close of our Revolution England and France were paying them yearly tribute for safety, and Spain had bought them off for three million dollars cash.

But when one reads of an American Congress answering the insolent demands of Deys and Bashaws by sending over ransom and tribute money, stores, and even a war-ship, with humble apologies for delay, the most peace-loving citizen feels that under such conditions war becomes a duty.

Our abject attitude toward these pirates had the natural results. Not only did we pay them more than the million dollars which we were not willing to invest in the necessary war-ships, but our seamen were still slain and imprisoned, our flag and officers were openly insulted, our commerce was broken up, and our name became a thing of contempt.

And as a final touch we had to build the ships and go to war after all.

One result was the founding of the Navy Department in 1798, together with the completion of the *Constitution*, the *Constellation*, and the *United States*. In 1801 open war came with Tripoli, and the first blow was struck when Sterrett in the *Enterprise* captured the *Tripoli* after a savage battle. The war dragged on. In October, 1803, came a disaster.

One morning the *Philadelphia*, one of the best frigates in our little navy, was cruising on her station when she sighted a large Tripolitan xebec standing in for the bay. Bainbridge made sail and chased her. Driving along under full sail, firing her bow-guns and sounding as she went, the *Philadelphia* pursued hotly. But all of a sudden the water shoaled. There was a terrific shock. To his chagrin, the American captain found himself hard and fast on a hidden reef.

The town was less than three miles away. No other ships of the squadron were in sight. Presently nine Turkish gunboats sped toward the doomed ship out of the harbor.

Bainbridge tried every expedient possible. With anchors cut from the bow, guns run aft and then cast overboard, mainmast cut away, water-casks broached, hold pumped out, he strove to get his vessel afloat. All was in vain. So the magazine was flooded, the ship scuttled, the flag came down.

The crew were captured, ill-treated, and imprisoned. The frigate was dragged from the reef and anchored in triumph under the fort's guns. It was a sad day for the new navy of the United States.

So bitter was the recollection, that Bainbridge wrote Commodore Preble, suggesting a cutting-out expedi-

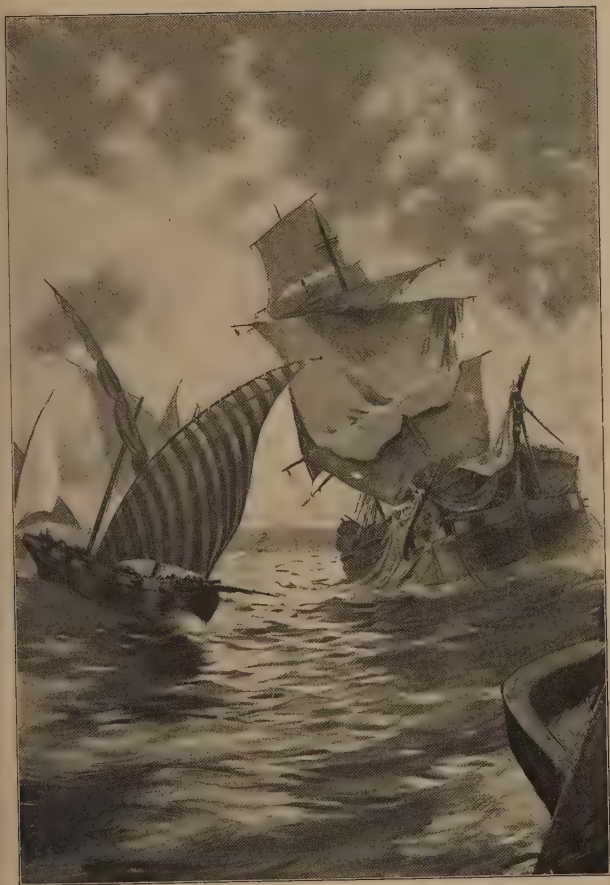
tion to destroy the ship. She was heavily manned; a hundred guns frowned down on her from the castle; a swarm of Tripolitan gunboats surrounded her. But when the idea was broached in the squadron, so many officers clamored for the chance that lots had to be cast.

The lucky man was a young lieutenant, Stephen Decatur, Jr., whose father had captured the first privateer in the scattering war with France. Picking eighty men from the eager crowd of volunteers, among them Lieutenant James Lawrence and Midshipman James Macdonough, Decatur set out in a small ketch on the night of February 16, 1804. Her hold was full of explosives and fire materials. He had secured a pilot who knew the harbor and spoke the language like a native. The order was death to any man who made a noise or used any weapon but cold steel.

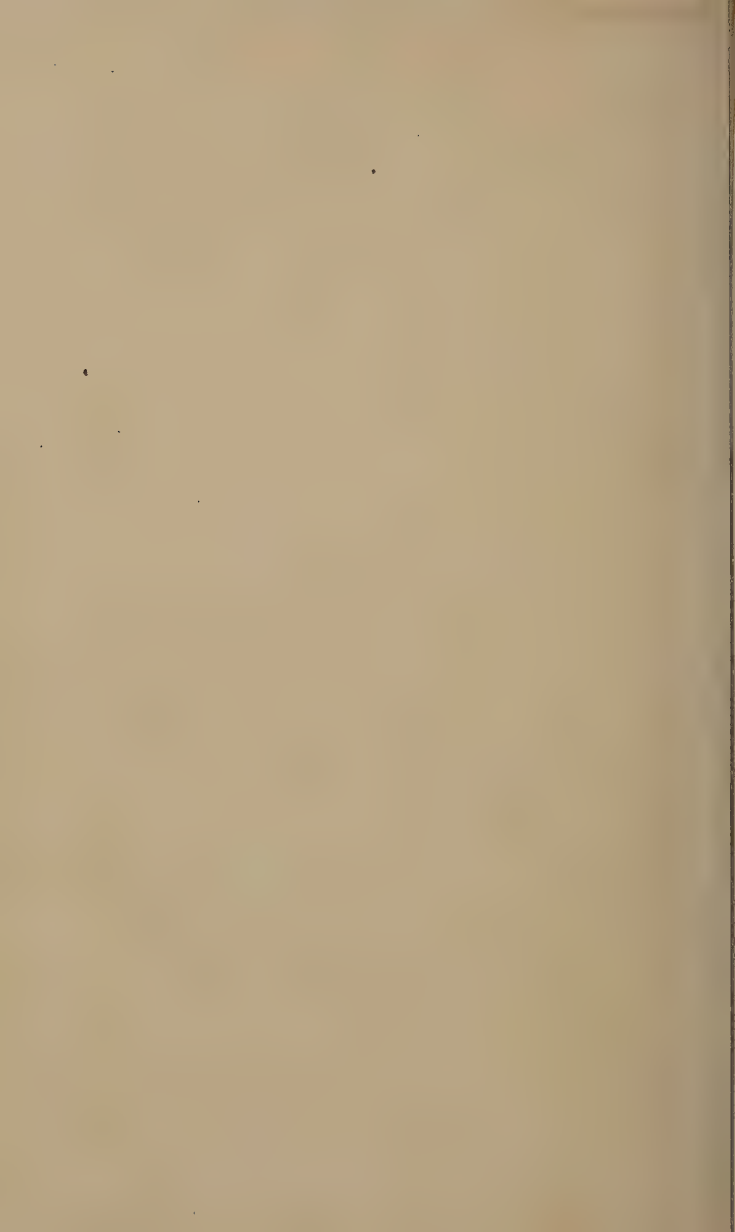
Silently the little boat stole into the harbor in the darkness.

It was nearly midnight when she swung under the bows of the *Philadelphia*, whose black hulk loomed up far above her. All about were the lights of the gunboats. Other lights against a vague blur beyond marked the castle, whose heavy guns were ready to send them to the bottom, or blow them into the air, in the twinkling of an eye if the alarm were once given. It was the crisis of the expedition; not much imagination was needed to fancy the result if their first greeting was a shot into that death-stored hull; every man aboard the ketch felt the thrill and the terrific strain of waiting.

But not a sound was made as the little craft drifted like a ghost toward the quiet frigate. Only half a dozen of the party, and these disguised, were on deck, the rest being out of sight below.



The *Philadelphia* . . . hard and fast on a hidden reef in the waters
of Tripoli



A sentinel hailed her: "What ship is that?"

The pilot answered glibly: she was a trader from Malta. They had been through a gale and had lost their anchors. To avoid running foul of something, they wanted to moor to the frigate till morning. Cunningly he went on to describe such a cargo as proved irresistible to sailor fancy. The Tripolitan officer was more than willing to have this mouse stay by the cat till daylight.

At this moment a puff of wind took the ketch aback. She began to drift away from the frigate. Discovery seemed imminent.

Calmly Decatur ordered two men into a boat, to carry a line to the frigate's forechains. Then the crew warped her vigorously up alongside.

Nearer and nearer she came, and as the moment approached the assailants began to prepare for their rush. When there was still quite a space left between the two vessels, a Tripolitan, who had been watching out of a port-hole, caught a glimpse of men in uniform aboard the peaceful trader.

"Americanos! Americanos!" he shouted.

Another on deck ran forward with his cutlass raised.

"Pull, men! Pull for your lives!" commanded the American officers.

The Yankees put their backs to the work like a tug-of-war team. The Turk cut the rope with one blow. But that last sturdy effort had done the job. The ketch moved slowly up alongside her prey.

"Boarders away!" called Decatur, leaping across into the *Philadelphia's* rigging. His men followed in one surge, like a great human wave. There was not a cheer or a shot, but, cutlass in hand, they swept the decks. In ten minutes the Turks were cut down or

had leaped overboard. The *Philadelphia* was momentarily back under the Stars and Stripes.

Now came the real test. A line was formed. With orderly speed, the combustibles were passed up from the ketch, placed about according to an exact diagram, and set on fire.

Fifteen minutes sufficed. The party assigned to the berth-deck had to run the gantlet as they scrambled up again. When Decatur reassembled his gallant eighty on board the ketch, the frigate was bursting into flames forward, astern, and amidships.

Off stood the adventurers on their perilous return trip. Every gunboat in range opened upon them as the frigate's funeral pyre lit up the scene. The castle's heavy guns thundered away and splashed buckets of water over them, the while they bent to the oars. Even the poor old frigate hurled out shot after them as the flames bit into her vitals.

Every moment they expected her magazine to explode and crush or fire them as the débris rained down. On they rowed, while the mounting flames lit up the confusion like a scene on the stage.

And then as the fierce conflagration made it evident their success was complete, the rowers stopped short. Three rousing cheers resounded in the ears of the infuriated enemy. Bending to their oars again, the Americans swept their ketch away to safety, while the *Philadelphia* with a mighty roar vanished into charred timbers and wreckage.

Without losing a man, Decatur returned to receive the rank of captain and a sword from Congress, as fitting acknowledgments of one of the most dashing cutting-out exploits on record.

Eleven years later, having won a succession of laurels

in the War of 1812, and having just captured the largest corsair war-ship, this same Stephen Decatur stood on the quarter-deck of his flag-ship and received the submission of the Dey of Algiers to a treaty insuring reparation and future freedom from attack—which marked the ending for all time of pirate tribute or ransom from the United States.

CHAPTER XXXI

REID AND THE *GENERAL ARMSTRONG*

ON the 9th of September, 1814, the American privateer *General Armstrong* sailed from New York. She was a smart little brig, carrying seven guns and about one hundred men, commanded by Captain Samuel Chester Reid, who had served in Truxtun's West India squadron, and who had made her famous as perhaps the fastest, most dashing privateer afloat.

After a couple of weeks' cruise (in which a few vessels had been boarded, a British ship of the line eluded, and a big brig skirmished with) Captain Reid put into harbor at Fayal on the 26th to replenish his stock of water.

He called on the American consul and arranged to have his water sent off immediately, as he intended to put to sea again next morning.

Having finished his business, he returned to his vessel, the consul accompanying him. Reid tried to get some information about the British cruisers in that neighborhood, but the consul assured him that none had touched at Fayal for several weeks.

They sat on deck talking. The captain kept a seaman's eye open in spite of the conversation; toward dusk he suddenly gave an exclamation. All the party looked up. Rounding the northeast point was a British brig, already within gunshot. In a few moments she was identified as the *Carnation*, of eighteen guns.

This was more than double the *General Armstrong's* strength, and Reid's first thought was to get under way immediately. The enemy had a breeze, however, while there was hardly any wind farther in; it looked as if it were impossible to get to sea without fighting against odds and at a disadvantage.

"Will they respect the neutrality of the port?" he asked the consul. (Fayal, of course, was Portuguese territory.)

The latter reassured him on this point. "They'll never molest you while at anchor," said he.

Captain Reid, however, kept a sharp watch on the approaching brig. He saw the pilot-boat board her, and saw that as soon as her captain learned who the stranger was, he hauled her close in and dropped anchor within pistol-shot of the American.

This was too close for comfort, but Captain Reid could do nothing save wait for events. His feelings may be imagined, however, when he looked up, just as the *Carnation* had swung into position, and saw two more British war-ships standing in to the harbor. One was a seventy-four-gun ship of the line, the *Plantagenet*: the other the frigate *Rota*, of forty-four guns. The three formed a squadron on its way to assist in the attack on New Orleans.

Its one hundred and thirty-six guns and two thousand men made the *General Armstrong's* crew feel somewhat lonely.

Nor did the neutrality of Fayal seem too much of a safeguard as they observed the signals between the *Carnation* and the flag-ship, and the activity that followed.

The full moon had just risen, and by its brilliant light the English brig could be plainly seen launching several boats.

Reid cleared for action, hoisted his anchor, and with long oars swept his vessel in nearer shore.

At once the *Carnation* cut her cable, made sail, and despatched four boats in pursuit.

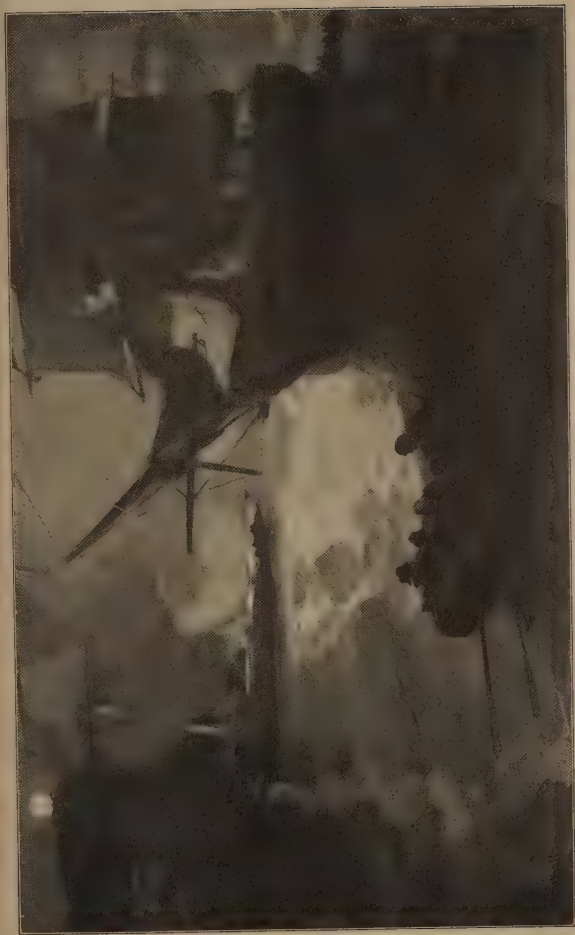
It was now about eight o'clock. Seeing the small boats coming, the American dropped anchor, set springs on his cable (so he could swing his broadside in any direction), and got ready for whatever might develop.

The boats drew near. Captain Reid hailed them repeatedly. There was no reply but they came on faster than ever. The former had no intention, however, of being gobbled up in this simple fashion. There were guns enough in the squadron, several times over, to blow the little privateer out of the water. But the cool impudence of this assault aroused him. There were about as many men in the four boats as the *Armstrong* had altogether, and he could see they were well armed.

As they swung up alongside, he opened fire. The boats returned the compliment briskly. They had found more than they bargained for, however, and after a short skirmish they raised a cry for quarter, hauled off, and returned to the *Carnation*, having lost about twenty killed and wounded. One man was killed and the first lieutenant wounded on the *Armstrong*.

It was quite clear that this was only "the beginning of the overture." The *Armstrong* was hauled close inshore, within a half pistol-shot of the Portuguese castle; here she was moored head and stern, while everything was made ready to give the warmest possible reception to the enemy.

It was a dramatic scene. One little vessel anchored



The full moon had just risen, and . . . the English brig could be plainly seen launching several boats



immovably there under the brilliant moon, its "back to the wall," so to speak, against a squadron; officers and men preparing feverishly for the attack they knew must follow; and all about the shore the inhabitants of the town, including the Governor, watching for the event like spectators at a circus.

About nine o'clock the *Carnation* towed in a large fleet of boats. These were stationed in three divisions, about a musket-shot away, the brig co-operating to cut off any attempt at escape.

Reid had no thought of escape. The whole affair was desperate to absurdity, but he had made up his mind not to abandon his vessel till he had given his foe some definite reasons for respecting the flag he flew.

For three hours his men stood at quarters. Then, about midnight, a dozen boats approached in line. They were loaded with about forty men each and had carronades aboard.

When they were close enough, the American gave them a broadside, which was answered warmly. The discharge from the *Armstrong's* forty-two-pounder Long Tom somewhat disconcerted the cutting-out party; but they were true, gallant British tars; giving three cheers, they dashed forward most spiritedly.

In a moment they were at the bow and starboard quarter.

"Board!" cried the officers. "And no quarter," was the added command, according to spectators on shore.

There was no more to be done with cannon. As the boarding-parties swarmed up to the rail, the crew attacked with swords, pikes, pistols, and muskets. There was a fierce hand-to-hand struggle—stab and slash and chop and fire with whatever came handiest.

The darky cook "did his bit" by dashing kettles of boiling water into the faces of the boarders. The British force was, as stated, nearly five times that on board the brig, and urged on by their officers, they made one effort after another to gain the vessel's deck—only to be beaten back with heavy loss.

After about twenty minutes of savage fighting, Captain Reid at the stern received word that his second lieutenant was killed forward. Shortly afterward the third lieutenant was badly wounded.

Noticing that the fire from the forecastle had slackened in consequence, he urged his lads in the after division to fresh efforts. The boats were beaten off from the quarters; and rallying the whole detachment, the captain led them forward with a shout to the conflict at the bow.

In ten minutes more all was over. Two of the captured boats were "loaded with their own dead"; in another, all were killed but four men; three were sunk; only one wounded officer survived from a boat that had held fifty. In a word, the squadron had lost over two hundred and fifty of its best officers and men, killed or wounded, Captain Floyd being among the latter. The privateer had two killed and seven wounded.

An Englishman who witnessed this attack from the shore wrote home a description of it, winding up: "We may well say 'God deliver us from our enemies' if this is the way the Americans fight."

Once more Reid prepared for defense; his guns were gotten into their berths, decks cleared, and everything put in readiness for the next attempt, whenever it should come.

About three in the morning a message came from the consul asking him to come on shore.

Here he was informed that the Governor had communicated with the English captain (Lloyd), asking him to stop further hostilities: but the wounded Lloyd replied that he'd have the privateer now if he knocked down the whole town. Moreover, if the Governor allowed the Americans to injure the vessel in any way, he would treat Fayal as an enemy port.

Reid saw there was no hope of saving his vessel. Accordingly, he sent his dead and wounded ashore and ordered the crew to get their belongings to safety.

When day came, the *Carnation* stood close in and opened a heavy fire upon the *Armstrong*. Reid gave her back everything in his broadside; and after several such doses, she hauled off with damaged rigging and topmast and a shot in her hull.

Soon afterward she returned and anchored. So, scuttling the *Armstrong*, Reid took his force to shore. Boats from the English brig completed the destruction by setting the privateer on fire.

But nothing can destroy the memory of that gallant fight by Samuel Chester Reid and eighty-eight American sailors against odds of twenty to one.

It is an interesting fact that this delay prevented the arrival of the British squadron at New Orleans till four days after Andrew Jackson reached the spot. Probably they would have captured Louisiana otherwise.

It is also notable that after nearly forty years of legal and diplomatic effort to get an indemnity from Portugal for this violation, the claimants lost their case when Louis Napoleon arbitrated it. And it took another thirty years to get the United States Congress to pay it.

It is pleasanter to read that Captain Reid was honored and fêted on his return; New York voted him thanks and a sword; he was navy sailing-master and harbor-master till his death. He invented and erected the signal-telegraph at the Battery and the Narrows, and established the light-ship off Sandy Hook. As an evidence of how versatile a hero can be, it may also be narrated that he was the designer of the present form of the United States flag—which retains the thirteen stripes and adds a new star for each new State.

All of which, for the son of a British naval officer (captured in a night expedition at New London, Connecticut, during the Revolution), was surely doing pretty well by an adopted country!

CHAPTER XXXII

THE FIRST AMERICAN ADMIRAL AND THE TORPEDOES

DAVID FARRAGUT was evidently determined to secure an early start at his life-work; his commission as midshipman was dated December 17, 1810, when David had reached the mature age of nine years and five months.

Moreover, his first cruise was barely over when the tension with Great Britain increased to the breaking-point; and no sea-dog could have asked for a better training-school than the War of 1812.

The boy was only twelve when he started under Porter in that memorable Pacific cruise of the U. S. S. *Essex*, where the thronging adventures, in this new world of storms and strange natives and sea-lions and alligators and tropical fruits, gave him some of the happiest days of his life.

Here's the kind of youngster he was, at the age when most boys are spending their chief energies in anything possible that's "agin the government"—mainly against the rule of schoolmasters. The *Essex* was off the Peruvian coast and had taken a number of prizes, among them the ship *Barclay*:

"I was sent as prize-master to the *Barclay*. This was an important event in my life, and when it was decided that I was to take the ship to Valparaiso, I felt no little pride at finding myself in command at twelve years of age. This vessel had been recaptured

from a Spanish *guarda costa*. The captain and his mate were on board, and I was to control the men sent from our frigate, while the captain was to navigate the vessel. Captain Porter, having failed to dispose of the prizes as it was understood he intended, gave orders for the *Essex Junior* and all the prizes to start for Valparaiso. This arrangement caused great dissatisfaction on the part of the captain of the *Barclay*, a violent-tempered old fellow; and, when the day arrived for our separation from the squadron, he was furious, and very plainly intimated to me that I would 'find myself off New Zealand in the morning'; to which I most decidedly demurred. We were lying still, while the other ships were rapidly disappearing from view, the commodore going north, and the *Essex Junior*, with her convoy, steering to the south for Valparaiso.

"I considered that my day of trial had arrived (for I was a little afraid of the old fellow, as every one else was). But the time had come for me at least to play the man; so I mustered up courage and informed the captain that I desired the maintopsail filled away, in order that we might close up with the *Essex Junior*. He replied that he would shoot any man who dared to touch a rope without his orders, he 'would go his own course, and had no idea of trusting himself with a d——d nutshell,' and then he went below for his pistols. I called my right-hand man of the crew, and told him my situation; I also informed him I wanted the maintopsail filled. He answered with a clear 'Ay, ay, sir!' in a manner which was not to be misunderstood, and my confidence was perfectly restored. From that moment, I became master of the vessel, and immediately gave all necessary orders for making sail, notifying the

captain not to come on deck with his pistols unless he wished to go overboard; for I would really have had very little trouble in having such an order obeyed.

"I made my report to Captain Downes, on rejoining him, and the captain also told his story, in which he endeavored to persuade Downes that he only tried to frighten me. I replied by requesting Captain Downes to ask him how he succeeded; and to show him that I did not fear him, I offered to go back and proceed with him to Valparaiso. He was informed that I was in command, he being simply my adviser in navigating the vessel in case of separation. So, this being settled and understood, I returned to the *Barclay*, and everything went on amicably up to our arrival at Valparaiso."

A few months later the "nutshell" again showed there was sound meat in him, when he received his baptism of fire. He was on the *Essex* during her spirited defense against the much stronger *Phæbe* and *Cherub*, serving as everything from captain's aide to gunner and powder-monkey, and, as his commander declared, well earning "the promotion for which he was too young to be recommended."

There followed nearly fifty years of active and widely varied service, which transformed the boy midshipman into one of the most experienced and dependable captains of the navy.

The unnatural war between the North and South convulsed the country. Though Farragut's family associations were mainly with Virginia, Carolina, and Louisiana, though he dreaded the thought of raising his hand against the South, his lifetime under the flag left him with but one clear conception of his duty. At the beginning of 1862 he was appointed commodore

of the Gulf Blockading Squadron to attack New Orleans, his boyhood home—which he did with brilliant success, leading his wooden vessels against ironclads and strong forts. Then he cleared the Mississippi by his daring passages of the Vicksburg and Port Hudson batteries, and found himself a rear-admiral. His flagship, the *Hartford*, was struck two hundred and forty times by shot and shell during this stirring year and a half.

Exciting as all this was, it was but a prelude to Mobile Bay. The blockading fleet had long found it impracticable to seal up this harbor, and an assault upon its strong defenses was imperative.

This was no picnic excursion. At the end of the peninsula guarding the entrance frowned the one hundred and fifteen guns of Fort Morgan, commanding the channel at easy range. Three miles northwest stood Fort Gaines with thirty more guns; and there was a third small redoubt, Fort Powell, six miles beyond. Off Fort Morgan lay the much exploited ram *Tennessee*, heavily armed and protected with six inches of armor; in these first days of ironclads she was supposed to be in herself more than a match for a whole fleet of wooden ships. Near her were anchored three wooden gunboats. The navigable waters were narrowed by piles, and two lines of torpedoes stretched from the flats off Fort Gaines to within a few hundred yards of Fort Morgan.

It was a problem peculiarly obnoxious to a blue-water sailorman, brought up under the old school of deep-sea duels between wooden vessels, with lots of room for manœuvring. But the sturdy Farragut was as eager for the chance as if he had been twenty-three instead of sixty-three. His four monitors finally joined him.

The army was ready to co-operate in a land attack. He wrote his wife on August 4:

"I am going into Mobile Bay in the morning, if God is my leader, as I hope He is, and in Him I place my trust."

Long before day of that following eventful Friday, the bo'suns' pipes sounded throughout the Union fleet. The fourteen wooden vessels formed a double column, lashed in pairs, the flag-ship *Hartford* beside the *Metacomet* being next to the leaders, the *Brooklyn* and *Octarora*. The four monitors, the *Tecumseh*, the *Manhattan*, the *Winnebago*, and the *Chickasaw*, were in single file on the right, the first abreast of the *Brooklyn*.

At half past five, Farragut, still quietly sipping his tea, turned to his captain:

"Well, Drayton, we might as well get under way."

In a few moments the fleet stood in, before the sou'-west breeze, for the Confederate line, echeloned across the channel and supported by the torpedoes and the fort. The orders were to go "slowly, slowly," and get as close as possible before opening fire.

The *Tecumseh's* guns boomed out at 6.47, and Fort Morgan was not slow in answering.

As the range lessened, Farragut signalled for "closer order": each pair closed up to within a few yards of the two ahead, and a little on the starboard quarter, bringing the bow-guns to bear on the fortress, but leaving the advantage with the enemy until the broadsides became effective.

On the poop-deck of the *Hartford* stood Captain Drayton, surrounded by his staff. At the wheel were three old veterans who had been in every engagement of the ship, until they seemed a part of it.

“And there stood the admiral in the port rigging, a few ratlines up, where he could see all about him, and at the same time converse with Jouett, who stood on the wheel-house of the *Metacomet*, which was lashed alongside. Freeman, his trusty pilot, stood above him in the top. In contrast with this, the scene on deck, where the men worked their guns with a will, was one of animation. As the smoke increased and obscured his view, the admiral, step by step, ascended the rigging, until he found himself partly above the futtock bands and holding on to the futtock shrouds. The watchful eye of Drayton detected his perilous position, and, fearing that some slight shock might precipitate him into the sea, he ordered Knowles to take up a line and make the admiral’s position more secure. Knowles says: ‘I went up with a piece of lead-line, and made it fast to one of the forward shrouds, and then took it round the admiral to the after shroud, making it fast there. The admiral said: “Never mind, I’m all right”; but I went ahead and obeyed orders, for I feared he would fall overboard if anything should carry away or he should be struck.’ Here Farragut remained until the fleet entered the bay.”

The orders to go slow and close had been obeyed; the *Hartford* was within a quarter-mile of the fort before a gun spoke.

“The calmness of the scene was sublime. No impatience, no irritation, no anxiety, except for the fort to open; and, after it did open, full five minutes elapsed before we answered. In the meantime the guns were trained as if at a target, and all the sounds I could hear were: ‘Steady! boys, steady! Left tackle a little; so! so!’ Then the roar of a broadside, and an eager cheer as the enemy were driven from their water-



From his exposed post Farragut watched the battle, alert for every chance

battery. Don't imagine they were frightened; no man could stand under that iron shower; and the brave fellows returned to their guns as soon as it lulled, only to be driven away again.

"At twenty minutes past seven, we had come within range of the enemy's gunboats, which opened their fire upon the *Hartford*, and, as the admiral told me afterward, made her their special target. First they struck our foremast, and then lodged a shot of one hundred and twenty pounds in our mainmast. By degrees they got better elevation. . . . Splinters after that came by cords, and in size sometimes were like logs of wood. No longer came the cheering cry: 'Nobody hurt yet.' The *Hartford*, by some unavoidable chance, fought the enemy's fleet and fort together for twenty minutes by herself, timbers crashing, and wounded pouring down—cries never to be forgotten."

From his exposed post Farragut watched the battle, alert for every chance. He saw Craven in the *Tecumseh* working up abreast of the fort, with the enemy's *Tennessee* on the port beam. Eager to attack this floating fortress, Craven cut across west of the red buoy.

Suddenly the *Tecumseh* reeled drunkenly to port. Down she went like a stone. Only a few tiny human figures struggling in the water remained of this leader of the monitors and her crew of one hundred and thirty.

Those on deck did not realize what had happened. Some one on the *Hartford*, thinking it was the *Tennessee* that had sunk, set up a cheer, which was echoed down the line.

Farragut knew only too well that this terrible disaster was due to a torpedo, though night reconnoissances by his flag-lieutenant had failed to discover

these reported obstructions. To add to his anxiety, the *Brooklyn* just ahead came to a stop.

"What's the matter with the *Brooklyn*?" he called to his pilot in the top above. "She must have plenty of water there."

Alden in the *Brooklyn* had seen the *Tecumseh's* fate. He began to back, spreading confusion among the ships behind. Their batteries were silent while the whole of Mobile Point was "a living flame." It looked like the beginning of a great catastrophe.

Farragut caught up a speaking-trumpet. "What's the trouble?" he demanded of the *Brooklyn*.

"Torpedoes!" came back the alarming reply.

"Damn the torpedoes!" shouted the admiral. "Four bells! Captain Drayton, go ahead! Jouett, full speed!"

Hastily dropping a boat to save the few survivors of the *Tecumseh*, the *Hartford* took the lead and dashed forward against fort, torpedoes, ram, and gunboats.

Inspired by such indomitable leadership, the other captains straightened out their tangled battle-line, barely averting the impending disaster. So great had been the disorder that the *Hartford* was a mile in the lead when they regained their formation. By that time they had been severely handled, the *Oneida* in the rear having among other injuries a shot through her boiler which would have made her helpless but for the wise lashing that held her to the *Galena*. Indeed, only the dense smoke and the desperate broadsides of shrapnel from the huddled fleet saved more than one from destruction at this period.

Following out his favorite fighting maxim that "the safest way to prevent injury from an enemy is to strike hard yourself," Farragut drove the *Hartford* right

through the mined waters, got clear of the forts, and tackled the Confederate gunboats, whose raking fire had played havoc among his men.

The dreaded *Tennessee* made a dash to ram her as she steamed up the channel; failing in this, the ships exchanged shots and the *Hartford* held on.

Along came the *Brooklyn*. The great ram made for her starboard bow, shifted helm when a hundred yards off, and poured in a broadside at two hundred feet which riddled her. Trying the same manœuvre with the approaching *Richmond*, the latter's marines made it so hot through the ports that the Confederate shot went high. But as the succeeding ships came abreast, the *Tennessee* battered them unmercifully, her own armor seeming unscathed by their shot. At length, almost crushing the crippled *Oneida* with two broadsides, she drew back under the guns of the fort.

Reinforced by his followers who had run this gantlet, Farragut made short work of the three Confederate gunboats. One was run aground in a sinking state and fired. Four Union ships cut loose and chased the others up and down the bay, capturing one. The *Morgan* finally escaped to Mobile.

The big end of the job still remained. The armored monster, which had proved so much more formidable than Farragut expected, was still to be reckoned with. She was apparently unscathed from her series of encounters, and lay under the guns of Fort Morgan.

Farragut anchored three miles up the bay, determining to delay this final trial of strength till darkness should prevent the fortress from effective gunnery.

But at quarter to nine the Confederate admiral Buchanan took the initiative: the *Tennessee* was seen

steaming toward the flag-ship in an evident determination to destroy her.

Farragut signalled his three monitors and the strongest wooden vessels to attack "not only with their guns, but bows on at full speed."

Now began an extraordinary mêlée, and one of the fiercest naval combats on record: one clumsy leviathan, two hundred feet long and forty broad, with an iron beak below the water-line, almost impregnable to her adversaries—and a dozen wood and iron foes frantically striving by "butting and shooting" to make some impression on her. The fatal weakness of the *Tennessee* was in her exposed steering-gear. Had this been as well protected as the rest of the ram, the issue might even then have been different. As it was, there followed a wild hour's mix-up.

The *Monongahela* was under way and struck the enemy first, but merely carried away her own iron prow and cutwater without injuring the ram. She was pierced through and through by the *Tennessee's* guns, while her shot and those of the *Chickasaw* rattled harmlessly on the metal sides.

Then the *Lackawanna* charged at full speed. She managed to crush the other's stern, and gave her a slight list, but did herself much more damage, staving in her own bows for eight feet above and below the water-line.

The *Hartford's* turn came. A quick shift of the ram's helm made the blow a glancing one; and the full broadside of nine-inch shot, at ten-foot range, had no perceptible effect.

It was crowded and difficult manœuvring for the Union vessels, and collisions were more than once barely avoided.

Farragut ordered Drayton to ram a second time. As the *Hartford* dashed forward, the *Lackawanna* ran full into her, cutting her down almost to the water's edge.

Farragut was on the poop-deck. In an instant the cry went up: "Get the admiral out of the ship!" The one impulse of all seemed to be for his safety.

But the old sea-dog was thinking of much more important matters than his own safety. He was over the side like a cat, to see for himself what the damage was.

Finding the ship would still float, he commanded Drayton to steer for the enemy again, and all speed ahead.

For all her protection, this same enemy was having a hard time of it. The three monitors had never ceased to pound her with their full force; one fifteen-inch ball had pierced to her vitals, her smoke-stack was shot away, her port-shutters jammed, her commander badly wounded, and, most serious of all, her steering-chains were gone, making it almost impossible to handle her effectively.

Moreover, the *Monongahela*, the *Lackawanna*, and now the *Hartford* were bearing down upon her.

Her fire had killed more men on the fleet than the fort's batteries, and she had left her mark upon every one of her throng of assailants. But she was now too sorely beset to continue the contest with any chance of success.

As the speeding *Ossipee* neared her sides, she hoisted the white flag.

It had "pleased God to grant" David Glasgow Farragut "one of the hardest-earned victories of my life, and one momentous to the country"—the "most

desperate battle I ever fought since the days of the old *Essex*."

A higher rank than our navy had ever known, created for the purpose by a special law of Congress, was needed to commemorate this crowning achievement of a magnificently courageous leader.

And one who looks at Saint-Gaudens's fine statue in Madison Square, New York, feels in every rugged line of him that dominating principle of his success: "*Attack, regardless of consequences, and never turn back.*"

PART V

FAMOUS DEEDS OF DISCIPLINE

Disciplined bravery has more than once conquered the world. King Philip of Macedon had his son, the great Alexander, trained by Aristotle in the lore acquired by the latter from his study of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato. One result of this acquired philosophy translated into practical action was the formation of the Macedonian Phalanx, sixteen spears deep, in the hands of heavy-armed infantrymen trained to advance till another order was given—with the relentless inevitability of an avalanche.

At Arbela this grim human machine cut its way like a modern squadron of "tanks," straight through the Persian myriads to the royal standard of Darius—who fled in terror before that irresistible, bristling menace.

The Phalanx was the instrument through which Alexander seized and kept the mastery of the world—until another disciplined formation of more flexibility and equal determination, the light Roman legion, transferred the power to its originators.

Oddly enough, the "guards back" play in football by which Pennsylvania University for years overwhelmed her opponents was almost an exact application of the ancient phalanx idea. And, of course, the modern "Trust" and all great business organizations to-day are founded upon a more elaborate variety of this primary "close formation." It is discipline, co-operative effort against a foe, united attack that has made possible, for instance, the achievements of the labor-unions for their members in

the last twenty-five years. One cannot help wondering what may not be the result when the whole world of human beings learns to use this mighty, associated, shoulder-to-shoulder force against disease, crime, poverty, and ignorance, instead of against each other.

So far as the individuals thus welded together are concerned, it is remarkable how each is uplifted by the others. The mere habit of obedience to orders will hold a man to a task which his reason would otherwise bid him drop as foolhardy. And there is something electric, inspiring, that flows from one comrade to another in the face of difficulty and danger. A crowd seems to have possibilities, both of degradation and heroism, often transcending those of any of its units when alone.

It is interesting to note, by the way, in the light of modern statements about democracies being inevitably poor makers of war, that the various races lumped as "Greeks" who composed Xenophon's immortal Ten Thousand, would halt, in the middle of a hostile land twelve hundred miles from their own country, and surrounded by millions of barbarians bent on their destruction—even at such a crisis they would stop to elect generals and officers. Nor would they obey orders unless the common sense of the majority confirmed them. They were democrats of an advanced type who accomplished this feat.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE PASS OF THERMOPYLÆ

THE land of Greece was filled with foreboding. Word had come that Darius, the conquering King of Persia, furious over his defeat at Marathon by the Athenians, was assembling a vast army to crush the Greeks once for all.

For more than four years this monarch and his successor had been gathering the bravest soldiers from all their subject lands—Medes and Persians and Assyrians, Bactrians, Scythians, and Parthians, Phrygians, Thracians and Lydians, Arabs and Ethiopes, and a score of other races. All nearer Asia and northern Africa had been drawn on for one overwhelming effort against little Hellas.

The quarrel, according to the Persians, went back to the Greek siege of Troy. Its bitterness had certainly been handed down for generations—Asia against Europe, East against West. After these centuries of war and enmity, the great King was to end the matter by enslaving his stubborn enemies.

Word came at last that Xerxes, son of Darius and grandson of Cyrus, had actually set out with this incredible host of barbarians; that having scourged the Hellespont for breaking up his first bridge of boats, he had led his forces across this historic strait into Europe; seven days and nights had been occupied in crossing, and the number of those who crossed was reported at millions; no less than twelve hundred triremes, with

half a million more men, were to make a joint attack by sea; there were foot-soldiers and horsemen, camel corps and chariots, wild archers and spearmen; the very rivers were said to fail and not afford sufficient drink for the army and beasts; terrifying tales sped about of the ferocity of the savage tribes, of Amazons captaining galleys of the fleet, of the awful beauty, stature, grandeur, and implacable severity of Xerxes himself.

Small wonder that Greece trembled. Natural enough that one who saw these endless hordes pouring over the boat-bridge across the Hellespont should exclaim: "Oh, Jupiter, why hast thou taken the form of a Persian and the name of Xerxes, and brought all mankind with thee to destroy Greece—since it was in thy power without this?"

Their case would have seemed quite hopeless even had they been united and ready. But the Athenians were at war with the Æginetæ; several other states were arrayed against each other; there was no concerted action between any two Powers. To emphasize the division, when the heralds of Xerxes came demanding submission, Thessaly, Thebes, and half a dozen others sent back earth and water in token of surrender.

Many of those who would not stoop to this were ill-disposed to fight, because of fear or of relations with the Medes.

But for Athens and Sparta all had been lost. The Athenians were at first dismayed by an evil prophecy from the Oracle at Delphi; only when Themistocles advanced an opposite interpretation of the Oracle's words did they decide to resist the barbarians with all their might.

Proud Sparta never hesitated. Her sons were of the

same mind as when their ambassador rejected a Persian governor's counsel to submit sensibly: "What it is to be a slave you know perfectly well, but you have never tried whether liberty be sweet or not; for if you had tried it, you would advise us to fight for it, if we had no spears but only hatchets."

Leonidas was offered by Xerxes the kingship of all Greece if he would submit to Persian domination: he refused with contempt.

These two resolute states brought together a portion of the Greeks. They sought alliance with Argos, Crete, and Sicily; but old enmities and Sparta's haughty claim to lead made these efforts mostly unavailing.

Meanwhile the Persian host was pressing on, by land and water, and the tales of its terrible might grew more alarming instead of less. It became only too clear that the brunt of the onslaught must fall upon the few thousand Greeks who had pledged themselves to mutual fidelity.

It was at length decided to make the first stand at the pass of Thermopylæ. This narrow cleft, in places only wide enough for a single wagon-road, lay near the city of Trachis. The invader must pass through it to reach the Isthmus. Thither the defenders hurried as news arrived that Xerxes was sweeping through Thesaly and Achaia; and the hastily assembled fleet, a third as large as that of the Persians, was ordered to the neighboring waters of Artemisium.

It was the time of the Carnean festival in Sparta, and the Olympic games were in progress. Underestimating the rapidity of the barbarian advance, the allies sent forward only a small advance-guard, thinking their main force could join them after these solemnities were concluded.

Leonidas, reputed a descendant of Hercules, who had unexpectedly succeeded to the throne of Lacedæmon, led forward a band of three hundred Spartans, selected from those who had heirs. To him were joined four hundred Thebans (who had been suspected of wavering) and thirty-five hundred more allies from the Peloponnesus and Bœotia. In addition, there came from close by a force of Locrians and Phocians, impressed by the appeal that their foe was "not a god, but a man, and that there never was, nor would be, any mortal who had not evil mixed with his prosperity from his very birth."

Upon leaving Sparta, Leonidas enjoined upon his wife to take after his death a husband of honor and virtue—that her future children might be worthy of her first husband.

These five thousand men, of a dozen states, took up their positions in the pass, an inaccessible and precipitous mountain that stretched to Mount Ceta guarding their left, a marsh and the sea on the other side. There was generally supposed to be no passageway except through the rocky defile.

To them came presently startling news. The enemy had reached the country of the Melians. He would be upon them long before their main army had planned to arrive.

Consternation seized the Greeks. All the other Peloponnesians wished to retreat and guard the Isthmus. But Leonidas, perceiving the indignation of the Phocians and Locrians at this proposal, resolved to stay, merely despatching messengers to Athens and Sparta to urge the need of immediate reinforcements.

Xerxes had learned that a small army was awaiting him at Thermopylæ, and had been scornfully incredulous.

lous when the Greek Demeratus in his army assured him this handful would fight: "How could a thousand men, or even ten thousand, or even fifty thousand, being all equally free, and not subject to the command of a single person, resist such an army as this? For if they are five thousand, we are more than a thousand to one . . . and there are Persians among my body-guard who would readily encounter three Greeks at once." Demeratus had replied: "The Lacedæmonians together are the bravest of men, for though free they have a master over them, the law, which they fear much more than your subjects fear you. And it ever enjoins the same thing, forbidding them to fly from battle before any number of men, but to remain in their ranks, and conquer or die." At which the Persian prince had been vastly amused, and spent himself in jests.

He now sent forward a mounted scout to reconnoitre.

The horseman rode into the gorge, close to the camp. The Greeks had repaired the old wall barring the passage, and their main camp was established behind this. The Spartans were on guard in front, however, and the observer watched them going through their customary gymnastic exercises, their weapons piled against the wall, while some combed their long hair. They disdained to pay any attention to him, so he was able to estimate their numbers and inspect the ground at his leisure.

His report seemed so ridiculous to Xerxes that Demeratus was again summoned.

"Tell me," he commanded, "what these men are about, for I cannot understand it."

"Hear the truth once more, oh, King," said the Greek. "These men have to fight with us for the pass,

and are now preparing to do so; for it is their custom, when they are going to hazard their lives, to dress their heads. But be assured, if you conquer these men, and those that remain in Sparta, there is no other nation in the world that will dare to raise their hand against you, oh, King, for you are now to engage with the noblest kingdom and city of all among the Greeks, and with the most valiant men."

"Yet how," persisted the Persian, "being so few in number, can they contend with my army?"

"Oh, King, deal with me as with a liar if these things do not turn out as I say."

Still incredulous, Xerxes waited four days, expecting these madmen to come to their senses and fly from his path.

Then, enraged at their arrogance, he sent forward the Medes and Cissians with orders to take them alive and bring them before him.

The headlong rush of the Medes bore down many of the defenders. They rallied immediately and charged back. Hour after hour they fought, until their assailants became more concerned about getting themselves back alive than carrying out their grandiloquent orders.

Having had their fill of the fray, the Medes retired. Forward came the "Immortal" Persians, flower of the army, confident that the matter would not take long to settle now. On a lofty throne of white marble sat their prince, to see them sweep away this petty obstacle.

In the narrow space they were deprived of the chief advantage of their numbers, and their repeated assaults made no impression on the Greek line. The latter had longer spears, and did such huge execution on their

enemy that Xerxes thrice leaped from his throne as his cohorts rolled back in disorder.

Night fell with the pass still firmly held.

Nor did the next day bring any change, though the invaders felt they would find their foes exhausted. Marshalled in companies by nations, the Greeks held their ground, and handled the Persian columns so roughly that they were again forced to retire.

Chagrined and perplexed at this incredible check to his progress, Xerxes knew not what to do.

Then there came to him a treacherous native named Ephialtes. This Melian knew of a secret path from the Asopus River across the mountain behind Thermopylæ. Hoping for a great reward, he offered to guide the Persians by this old track over the ridge, so that they could fall upon the enemy at an advantage.

It was a solution from the skies. In delight, Xerxes ordered Hydarnes to lead his defeated troops to this sure opportunity for revenge.

At the hour of lamp-lighting the columns set forth. They crossed the river, and marched all night along the rocky trail, which wound in and out but ever climbed upward, upward. When day broke, the head of the army was nearing the top.

Leonidas had felt safe from attack on this side, for the approach was guarded by the thousand Phocians, who had volunteered to defend the path and their own country. They had seen nothing of the enemy, since the mountain slopes were densely covered with oaks.

Suddenly the breeze brought to their ears a rustling of dry leaves and the dull tramp of many feet. The Phocians sprang to arms as the first of the barbarians emerged from the sheltering trees.

Surprised at the sight of men in armor, Hydarnes inquired of Ephialtes whether these were more of the now dreaded Spartans. Learning that they were not, he set his men in battle order and advanced.

A rain of arrows drove the Phocians back on the heights, where they prepared to perish, fancying the attack was upon them. But the Persians paid no further attention to this negligible band; swinging past them, the interminable lines topped the crest and hastened down the other side of the mountain.

It had been a gloomy morning in the Grecian camp. The augur Megistias had told them of impending death when he inspected the sacrifices. Deserters brought Leonidas information of the attempt on his flank. And as day dawned, scouts raced down from the heights with the startling details.

The leaders held a council. Many pointed out that to hold their position longer was mere suicide. Others would not consider retreating. When the assembly dispersed, a number at once set out for their home cities.

At this point the descendant of Hercules took matters into his own hands.

Apparently his indomitable pride was not loath to seize the chance for immortality presented by his allies' uncertainty. There was no possibility of choice for him and his three hundred. Sparta reared her sons in an iron discipline, and disowned him who turned his back upon a foe. So, since this was the end for them, the fewer who stayed, the greater the glory. Indeed, even from a military point of view, an ally who might flinch was worse than none in that stern hour ahead.

He bade all depart except the suspected Thebans, treating them as hostages. They went, sad at heart. But the Thespians refused to abandon him. Their

leader, Demophilus, announced they would stay to the end.

Two Spartans were also dismissed. These men, Eurytus and Aristodemus, were almost blind with a desperate disease of the eyes; Leonidas ordered them, as unfit for fighting, to start homeward. Megistias, the augur, he also commanded to flee from his own foreboding prophecy; but the diviner was also a Spartan; he sent away his son, his only child, but remained himself.

The little band made ready to sell their lives at the highest price they could exact.

A fugitive dilated upon the vast numbers of the enemy, most of whom they had not yet seen. "When their bowmen let fly their arrows, the multitude of their shafts hide the sun," he declared.

Up spoke sturdy Dieneces: "Our Trachinian friend gives us welcome news: for if the Medes obscure the sun, we shall have the cool shadow to fight in."

They had not long to wait. Xerxes, in the main camp, poured out his libations at sunrise, and shortly thereafter launched his cohorts along the pass as before; for Ephialtes had pointed out that the descent of the flanking force would be rapid.

Leonidas abandoned his fortifications and marched solemnly forth to the wider space beyond the scene of the former struggles. The end was certain, and any hour might bring Hydarnes down upon his rear; more room meant more chance to kill.

The Persian masses surged forward. They were met with javelins and swords and slaughtered by hundreds. But there were ever more thousands behind, and their officers scourged the waverers on, so that many were trampled to death underfoot or pushed over the cliff

into the sea. The doomed Spartans and Thespians fought with incredible valor, piling the ground with enemy bodies. As long as a man could thrust or cut, he kept up the hopeless contest. When he fell, his companions closed up, never slackening their desperate attack.

It was such a fight as the world has not known before or since. Homer might have described it. History will never cease to give it the leading place in the endless roll of battles.

At length King Leonidas, covered with wounds, went down, wielding his sword to the last. The struggle over his body was even fiercer than before. Four times the enraged Greeks beat back the Persian masses. Two sons of King Darius fell in this savage mêlée. The body was rescued and carried to the rear. Spartans and Thespians fought on with fresh determination.

The expected blow fell. Word came that the army led by Ephialtes was almost upon them. Those who were left drew back beyond the wall, and formed in a compact body on the rising ground. The Thebans, who had made a show of aiding, drew off by themselves.

Then from all sides the barbarian wave dashed upon this remnant. Battling with swords, with hands, with teeth, they were overwhelmed. Not one man surrendered. When it was over, they were not.

“Thus the Greeks fought at Thermopylæ.”

Eurytus, one of the two half-blind Spartans, heard of the Persians approaching from the mountain. He forced his helot to arm him and lead him to the throng. There the slave ran off. Eurytus plunged into the fray and perished with his comrades.

The other, Aristodemus, reached Sparta—to find

himself an outcast, his name a hissing and a scorn. Later on, at the battle of Plataea, he performed such prodigies of reckless valor as to redeem the memory of "Aristodemus the Coward."

The pusillanimous Thebans pleaded to the conquerors that they had fought only under compulsion and had been first to send earth and water; beginning with their general, Leontiades, they were by Xerxes' command branded with the royal mark.

Contrary to Persian custom, Xerxes commanded that dead Leonidas's head be severed and fixed on a pole, so violent was his rage against this man who had humiliated him.

But nothing the conqueror could do could make his victory aught but a defeat. Thermopylæ was a flame which fired the heart of Greece. Though Xerxes captured Athens, his great fleet was almost annihilated in the battle of Salamis; leaving three hundred thousand men under Mardonius to winter in Thessaly, he made his way back to Persia, arriving with a mere fragment of his host.

Centuries after these Spartans died (490 B. C.) a stone lion in the pass reminded every passer-by of the deed of Leonidas.

And for nearly twenty-five hundred years the very word *Thermopylæ* has evoked a vision of the highest pitch of devoted courage. This, as much as those colossal triumphs of the sculptor's and builder's and craftsman's art, is "the glory that was Greece."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE MARCH OF THE TEN THOUSAND

DARIUS the great King of Persia was dead. He left to his eldest son Artaxerxes dominion over his vast empire. His youngest son, named Cyrus after that conqueror who first made the Persians supreme in Asia, he had invested satrap of the western portion of the realm—Lydia, greater Phrygia, and Cappadocia.

Accused of treason by his false friend Tissaphernes, young Cyrus was imprisoned by his brother, and would have been put to death but for his mother's intercession. This enmity and disgrace made him plot in earnest. He was idolized by those he ruled. Generous, just, brave, modest, able, he was universally acknowledged to be such a prince as had not appeared among the Persians since the days of his great namesake. He set about building up an army at whose head he might brave Artaxerxes and take the kingdom for himself.

The Greeks had written their valor large on many a bloody battle-field. Marathon, Thermopylæ, Salamis, and Plataea had left no doubt in any Persian mind as to the fighting qualities of these European neighbors. Cyrus took every chance to add Greek mercenaries to the forces he was gathering, under pretense of marching against the Pisidians who were disturbing his borders.

All was at last ready. He set out from Sardis on his bold attempt for a throne, and advanced through Lydia and Phrygia.

Reviewing his army before the Queen of Cilicia, there were, besides the hundred thousand "barbarians,"

a force of eleven thousand heavy-armed Greeks and two thousand targeteers.

The Persian prince in a battle-car and the visiting Queen in a chariot drove down in front of this compact line of Greeks from many states, commanded by Clearchus the Spartan, Proxenus of Bœotia, Menon of Thessaly, and other generals. They were seasoned warriors who wore helmets and greaves of brass, with scarlet vests, and shields and pikes that glittered in the sunlight.

The order was given to present arms and advance in order of battle. The trumpets sounded. The thousands of flashing pikes swung as one to the front. With great shouts the Greek lines charged forward behind these bristling spear-points.

So realistic and terrifying was the manœuvre that the fair Queen, in whose honor all this had taken place, leaped from her chariot and fled, followed by her guards, many of the native troops, and the sutlers and camp-followers; whereat the laughing Greeks repaired to their tents, and Cyrus once more congratulated himself upon this disciplined and awe-inspiring fighting-machine he had acquired.

Among these men of Hellas was one named Xenophon. He was neither general nor captain, nor even a professional soldier. His companions knew little of him beyond that he was a volunteer attached to Proxenus. Indeed, he had made little stir during his forty-three years in his own city of Athens; inquiry would have revealed merely that he was the son of Gryllus, and a disciple of Socrates the philosopher.

Small idea had those proud warriors that this unknown outsider was to save their lives, and, in doing so and telling the story, to make them immortal. How

vastly would the Persian prince and the beautiful Queen of Cilicia have been amused had one foretold during that review that thousands of years later they would be remembered only as picturesque scenery observed through the eyes of this insignificant volunteer, while he would be known to all civilized men as general, soldier, historian, philosopher, orator, sportsman—and, above all, a shining example of Man the Master of adversity.

The very manner of his coming had revealed some of his character.

Receiving earnest messages from Proxenus, to whom he was bound by the rights of hospitality, he consulted his master Socrates concerning the voyage. The philosopher pointed out that the Athenians were very bitter against Cyrus, who had aided the Spartans against them, and advised Xenophon to take counsel of the Oracle at Delphi before joining this enemy of his city.

Repairing to the sacred spot, Xenophon inquired of Apollo to which gods he should sacrifice for a happy issue to his expedition. But, as Socrates pointed out on his return, he did not ask at all whether or not he should go, having plainly come to his own determination on this main point.

Here he was, then, ignorant like his fellows of what lay ahead; for only Clearchus of all the Greeks knew the real destination of the army.

Suspicious began to arise when they reached Tarsus, where stood the palace of the Cilician King. When Clearchus endeavored to force his men to go on, they stoned him, declaring they had not enlisted against the King of Persia. Only by the guile of the leader, pretending to submit to their will, while pointing out the

difficulties of their position and the value of Cyrus's friendship in this strange land, and by an increase of pay, were they induced to proceed.

Advancing along the Syrian coast, Cyrus struck across to the Euphrates River. Here he called together the Greek generals, told them frankly he proposed to march against the Persian monarch at Babylon, and urged them to persuade the mercenaries to follow.

By promises of rewards, and the shrewd counsel of Menon, the Greeks were filled with enthusiasm for the formidable enterprise. They waded across the half-mile stretch of the Euphrates, the boats having been burned by the retiring Persian general; and when they found that, despite the natives' assertions that the stream was unfordable, the passage was made in safety, all declared that even the historic river was submitting itself to Cyrus as its future King.

Across the level, treeless plain they advanced, wondering at the strange aromatic shrubs, the wild asses, swift ostriches, and bustards.

Before long they found the country ahead devastated by an enemy force. The Persian prince, Orontas, offered to take a thousand horse and ambush the raiders, thus obstructing their march. But his treacherous design was revealed by an intercepted letter; his guilt was proven before a court martial; he was haled to the tent of one of the sceptre-bearers; and no man of the army laid eyes upon him again—the only traitor to Cyrus in all the army.

The invaders pushed on into the land of Babylon. In the great plain crossed with canals, at a place called Cunaxa, they confronted the King's army, about ten times their own strength, with one hundred and fifty

fearsome chariots, having scythes from the axles and under the bodies to mow down everything human as their horses dashed forward.

The Greeks were on the right wing, next to the Euphrates. Cyrus, bareheaded, was in the centre of his Asian lines on the left.

After hours of waiting, a white cloud of dust rose in the distance. It spread like a darkness over the plain. Flashes from burnished armor appeared through the murk. The mighty host came into view, horse, foot, and scythe chariots, each of the many nations drawn up in a solid oblong body.

Cyrus rode in front of his ranks, surveying the enemy and his own inadequate forces.

Observing this, Xenophon rode up to him, asking for orders.

The leader commanded him to inform the men the sacrifices augured success.

At this moment a grim murmur ran through the lines of waiting Greeks.

"What does that mean?" demanded Cyrus.

"It is the battle word, given for the second time."

"What word?"

"Jupiter the Preserver, and Victory."

"I accept it," said Cyrus. "Let that be the word."

The enemy was now less than half a mile away. Cyrus returned to his post. Having sung their pæan, the Greek lines advanced.

The battle-line became irregular. Those behind hastened to regain their position. With a deafening shout, and clashing their pikes against their brazen shields, the little body charged upon the masses facing them.

The enemy was thrown into disorder. The horse-

men turned and fled. Many of the scythe chariots cut their way back through their own ranks. Losing only a single man, wounded by an arrow, the Greeks shattered this left wing and hurled it back in flight, pressing in pursuit as they felt the battle won.

Cyrus charged the opposing centre among his chosen six hundred horsemen. Cutting his way through the enemy, he beheld his rival, Artaxerxes. This had been his goal from the onset.

"I see the man!" he cried.

Dashing furiously ahead, with only a few of his attendants near, he wounded the King in the breast.

As he struck through his enemy's corselet, a javelin was hurled that caught him under the eye. A fierce *mêlée* followed around the two leaders. Fighting desperately, Cyrus and eight of his most trusted friends went down before overwhelming numbers.

Artaxerxes had his head and right hand cut off and raised on a pole, while his own encouraged followers advanced. The native forces of Cyrus, dismayed by his death, fled before them, abandoning their camp.

Thus the Greeks and Artaxerxes, three or four miles apart, each pursued the other's allies, in opposite directions—each certain of having won a complete victory.

Facing about, the Persians gathered themselves together and confronted this little band. But when they heard again that exulting pæan, and saw the alacrity with which the confident Greeks came to this new conflict, they fled hurriedly to a hill by the neighboring village.

Clearchus and his men pursued till nearly sunset without overtaking them. Then they returned—to find a plundered camp.

Most of them went fasting that night. And great was their uncertainty at not hearing from their Persian leader.

At sunrise came the news of Cyrus's death, which perplexed them the more; but, confident of their prowess, they sent word to Ariæus, his lieutenant, that if he would join them they would put him on the throne at Babylon, "for those who gain the victory, gain with it a right to command."

Messages came from the King by Phalinus, a Greek, bidding them deliver up their arms and repair humbly to court, lest a worse thing come upon them. At which the sturdy warriors bade him come and take these weapons if he could.

And Xenophon remarked: "You see, oh, Phalinus, that we have nothing now to depend on save our arms and our courage; and while we are masters of our arms we think we may make use of our courage also."

Yet some wavered before the common sense of the wily Phalinus and his report of the mighty power they were opposing.

Clearchus himself seemed undecided. The next day the whole body submitted to him, as the most experienced leader, and set forth to rejoin Cyrus's friends. In the night three hundred Thracians deserted to the enemy.

The junction was made, oaths were sworn, and the combined forces began their retreat.

Again Artaxerxes sent messages. Through Tissaphernes, whose men alone had not fled before the Greeks at Cunaxa, a truce was concluded. Much-needed provisions were secured. After weeks of negotiations, Tissaphernes represented that he had prevailed upon the King to permit him to conduct them safe home.

Once more they started, keeping separate from the army of Ariæus, which had become not so friendly.

There was continual suspicion of Tissaphernes, and when they reached the Zabatus River, Clearchus endeavored to clear up these jealousies, lest they break out into open conflict.

The Persian protested it had been and still was in his power to destroy them, if that had been desired. The whole trouble, he declared, came from mischief-makers who kept stating that the Greeks had designs against their escort. He easily persuaded the brave Clearchus, whose genius lay in war instead of guileful diplomacy, to bring the Greek generals and captains to a public conference, where these plots could be exposed and guarded against. This was the easier to bring about since Menon of Thessaly was much suspected by Clearchus.

The latter's urgency prevailed against the natural objections of many. Accompanied by the other four chief leaders—Proxenus, Menon, Agias, and Socrates the Achaian—with twenty captains, and two hundred soldiers, who were ostensibly going to market, the commander went next day to Tissaphernes's camp.

The five generals were bidden to enter. The captains stayed without. The conference began.

Presently a signal was given by the Persian satrap. The generals were arrested. The twenty captains were cut to pieces. The barbarian cavalry scoured the plain, killing all the straggling Greeks they found. While the thunderstruck army was protesting against this violation of oaths, the generals were hurried away to Artaxerxes, who had them all executed.

It was a gloomy prospect for the adventurers. Their leaders were wiped out at one foul blow; they were

ten thousand amid the myriads of a mighty monarch, clearly bent on their destruction; twelve hundred miles of strange country, swarming with foes, barred by impassable rivers, lay between them and Hellas; they had no guides; their former barbarian allies had deserted them, so they had no cavalry with which to pursue the enemy; even food could not be obtained any longer.

"These reflections so disheartened them, that few ate anything that evening, few made fires, and many that night never came to their quarters but laid themselves down, every man in the place where he happened to be, unable to sleep through sorrow and a longing for their country, their parents, their wives and children, whom they never expected to see again; in this disposition of mind, they all lay down to rest."

In a brief period of sleep that came to him at last, Xenophon dreamed he heard the thunder crash and the lightning fall upon his father's house, setting it ablaze.

It was hardly a cheerful omen. But the resolute mind took charge of affairs in the face of whatever might portend.

He asked himself why he lay there with the rest, making no preparation for defense, though all expected the King to attack them in the morning. Who was there to come to their help? What aid might they expect save from themselves?

It was the middle of the night, but he rose and assembled the captains who had served under Proxenus.

"Comrades," he began, "I can neither sleep, which I suppose is your case also, nor lie still any longer for thinking of our condition."

He pointed out that the enemy must have been all

ready to strike before committing this treachery, and that they knew what to expect when the King's own brother's dead body had been so cruelly mutilated.

"We ought therefore to do everything rather than fall into his hands."

The gods would favor them against such perjurers, he declared; and they had already shown their superiority in endurance as well as battle. Possibly others among their friends might have come to the same stern resolve:

"For heaven's sake then, let us not wait till they come hither to encourage us to glorious deeds, but let us be before them and incite even them to bravery.

"Show yourselves bravest of all the captains, most worthy to command of all the generals.

"As for me, if you desire to lead the way in this, I will follow you with cheerfulness; and if you appoint me to be your leader, I shall not excuse myself because of my age, but consider that I am in the very vigor of life to repel injuries."

At that they all desired him to take command.

Only one faint heart, Appollonides, declared in the Boeotian dialect that he who suggested any means of escape except by persuading the King spoke mere impertinences. Xenophon sternly rebuked him with the known facts, and declared him a dishonor to Greece; and, it being pointed out that his ears were pierced after the Lydian fashion, he was ignominiously expelled from the camp.

Then they called together the remaining officers from the whole army, a hundred in all, and about midnight Hieronymus, the oldest of Proxenus's captains, bade Xenophon speak to the assembly.

Eloquently he pointed out the danger, the sole

chance of escape, and the responsibility that lay upon every officer.

"For you know," he concluded, in words that ring to-day as they must have rung through that torch-lit blackness twenty-three centuries ago, "that neither numbers nor strength give the victory; but that side which with the assistance of the gods attacks with the greatest resolution, is generally irresistible.

"I have observed also that those men who in war seek to preserve their lives are apt to die with shame and ignominy; while those who look upon death as common to all and unavoidable, and are only solicitous to die with honor, oftener arrive at old age, and while they live, live happier.

"As, therefore, we are sensible of these things, it behooves us at this critical juncture both to act with courage ourselves and to exhort the rest to do the same."

His fire met with answering flame.

"Before this time, oh, Xenophon," declared a Spartan captain, "I knew naught of you save that you were an Athenian; but now I second both your words and actions, and wish we had many in the army like you."

So Tolmides the mighty Cryer was sent for, and an election of officers proclaimed. By daybreak Xenophon had been chosen in place of the murdered Proxenus, and the other empty places had been filled.

They heartened each other's resolution by speeches, vowed sacrifice to Jupiter the Preserver if they should reach home, and sang their pæan.

Arrayed in the most gorgeous armor he could provide, Xenophon cheered them with memories of such deeds as those of their fathers at Thermopylæ and Salamis against vast numbers of these very races. The only advantage of their horsemen, said he, was

that they could run away faster. All rivers were passable somewhere; they would seek their sources, if necessary. They were better off without their unreliable allies, trusting solely to their own proven might. They must burn all superfluities, travel light, and above everything unite in preserving the strictest discipline. The order of march was appointed.

All held up their hands in formal approval of his proposals.

"Now," he concluded, "you are to disperse and carry out what has been decided.

"And whoever among you desires to return to his family, let him remember to fight bravely, for this is the only means to effect it.

"Whoever has a mind to live, let him resolve to conquer; for it is the part of the conqueror to inflict death, that of the conquered to receive it.

"And if any among you covet riches, let him strike to overcome: for the victorious not only keep their own possessions but add to them those of the enemy."

While they were burning their baggage and eating, a commander of Cyrus's named Mithridates came with a few horsemen, urging on them the impossibility of returning without the King's consent. Suspecting his good faith, the more since a captain and twenty men deserted that night, the generals ordered that there should be no further treaty while they were in the enemy's country.

The Ten Thousand set forth upon their incredible march.

They crossed the Zabatus River, and advanced in battle array, the baggage and camp-followers in the centre. Mithridates appeared with some hundreds of horsemen, archers, and slingers; and he soon showed

the value of his friendship by attacking them. The heavy-armed Grecians were harassed at long range by their agile foes, whom they were unable to catch. They covered a scant three miles that whole day, and camped for the night, disheartened and blaming their leader.

Improvising a force of slingers from the Rhodians, and even a small company of cavalry with the aid of the baggage-horses, Xenophon was able to make a better showing next day, the five thousand Persians flying before the first charge with heavy loss.

That night they reached the Tigris River at the ancient ruined city of Resen.

A few miles beyond, they found a vast army raised by Tissaphernes on both flanks and at their rear. This host feared to attack, but the skirmishers assailed them with slings and bows and must be continually driven off by the Cretan archers and Rhodian slingers.

It had to be done over again the following day; and the square formation was abandoned as unwieldy, companies of a hundred each being formed to shift from centre to rear as the narrowing road, or bridges, or passes demanded.

Ten days after they had set out, they rejoiced at the sight of hills ahead, thinking this broken country would hamper the enemy's horsemen, who ever hung upon their flanks. But they had to fight their way through darts, stones, and arrows showered down on them from the heights; and eight surgeons were needed to care for the wounded that evening.

After a three days' halt, finding a lucky store of provisions, they descended into the plain again, much hampered by their wounded, always followed during the day by the barbarians. At night they had rest, for

the Persians never ventured to camp closer than six or seven miles.

Seeing nothing of the enemy for three days, they congratulated themselves on having finally shaken them off. They were rudely undeceived on the fourth; right ahead of them appeared the barbarian hordes, clustered on a height commanding the road.

Cheirosophus sent for Xenophon, who rode ahead from the rear where Tissaphernes could be seen advancing with an army that stretched as far as the eye could see. The Greeks were plainly to be crushed between the defended hills in front and the advancing multitudes behind.

Scanning the country, the leader noticed a passage from the crest of the near-by mountain to the enemy's position.

"Oh, Cheirosophus," said he. "I think the best thing we can do is to gain the top of this mountain as soon as possible; for if we are once masters of that, the enemy cannot maintain themselves upon the hill. You stay with the army, if you think fit, while I go up yonder; or, if you prefer to go, I will stay here."

"I give you the choice," replied the captain.

"Then, since I am the younger, I will go," declared Xenophon.

Hastily picking a detachment from the vanguard, to avoid the delay of sending back for his own men, he started up the steep slope.

The barbarians saw their design and hurried in the same direction to cut them off from this point of vantage. Shouts went up from each side as they raced for this crucial position.

"Soldiers!" cried Xenophon, riding beside them. "Remember you are striving to reach Greece. This

instant you are forcing your way to your wives and children. This one effort, and we shall advance without more opposition."

"We are not on equal terms," muttered one, Soteridas. "You are on horseback, while I am worn out with carrying my shield."

At this Xenophon leaped from his horse, thrust the grumbler out of his rank, and taking his shield marched on with his men as fast as they could—though the horseman's corselet he wore much impeded him on foot.

Urging on those in front and behind, he pressed upward. But the soldiers would not have this: they beat and abused Soteridas, and threw stones at him, till he resumed his shield and place.

Xenophon remounted and led them up till the way became impracticable for his horse. Then on foot once more, he headed the dash for the coveted position.

His spirit won the day. They reached the summit ahead of the barbarians. The latter fled when they saw themselves thus outmanœuvred, and the following army also disappeared. The Greeks passed over the ridge and descended into a plain near the Tigris abounding with food.

Though Tissaphernes fired some of the villages, they gathered together a store of provisions, held a council and decided they must strike northward over the mountains through the country of the fierce Parthians to Armenia, where they were told they could cross the headwaters of the Tigris, quite impassable at this place.

The week that followed was one to test all their resolution and endurance. The wild Parthians fled from their villages to the hills, but proved much more formidable than Tissaphernes and all his army. They harassed the Greeks with stones and arrows from their

fastnesses, and rolled down on them great boulders weighing a ton each. Every pass and defile was a trap. Xenophon himself narrowly escaped in one skirmish, when his armor-bearer deserted with his shield.

But in spite of incessant attacks, in spite of the deadly three-foot arrows that pierced through shields and corselets, in spite of storms, in spite of the steep, narrow, rocky roads, the Greeks fought their way along till they reached a well-stocked region by the Centrites River which formed the boundary between Parthia and Armenia.

Here they rested, enjoying their well-earned food, the fine houses, and the wine—so abundant it was kept in plastered cisterns.

They fancied their worst hardships were over. But daylight showed a strong body of Armenians and Chaldeans guarding the river. Moreover, the stream was more than breast-deep and full of slippery stones; and behind them appeared a multitude of their Parthian foes. To attempt to ford the river under such circumstances was to invite complete destruction. They camped, in sore perplexity.

Xenophon dreamed that night that he was chained but that his fetters burst of themselves. Cheered by this and by favorable sacrifices, the Greeks were breakfasting, when two young men brought word that while gathering wood they had discovered a ford, half a mile away, at a spot inaccessible to the enemy's horse.

Making a feint against the pursuing Parthians, Xenophon enabled Cheirosophus to lead the main body across this passage; then beating off continual assaults, he managed to get his own force to the other side also.

They marched comfortably over the undulating Armenian plain, and since the satrap of the land consented to a treaty, they soon put seventy miles behind them.

There were other troubles, however. Snow fell so heavily that men and arms were covered as they slept. The baggage-horses were numbed. The men themselves lay on the ground as if ready to give up further effort. Xenophon rose naked, and went himself to cut fire-wood; and shamed by his hardihood the men sprang to work, built great blazing fires, and rubbed their stiff bodies with native oils.

They learned presently that the Governor had treated with them only to lull them into fancied security, and was planning to fall upon them in a mountain defile ahead.

So they pushed on precipitately, surprised the enemy's camp, and drove them headlong.

Through deep snow, rugged passes, and across a desert, fifty miles, covered in three days, brought them past the Euphrates, though the bitter winds and travel through six-foot drifts caused the deaths of thirty soldiers, besides many slaves and horses. A large part of those who survived were tormented with a grievous distemper, termed the bulimy. Men were smitten with snow-blindness; their feet were frost-bitten so that toes dropped off in the intense cold; and these unfortunates had to be left behind.

Seeing a black patch of ground where a warm spring had melted the snow, a body of tormented soldiers dragged themselves thither and sank down, declaring they could go no farther.

Even when Xenophon assured them the enemy was close behind and angrily ordered them to advance,

they merely told him to kill them, for they could do no more.

Darkness had fallen. The barbarians at their heels came up, quarrelling loudly about the booty they thought in their hands. Then the Greek leader with all his well men charged upon them, while the worn-out ones, prostrate as they were, clashed their weapons and shouted. Whereat the Armenians fled in terror through the snow.

Half a mile farther on, Xenophon found another body resting in the same manner, and presently learned that the whole army had come to a halt. So they passed a miserable night without food or fire.

Next day the sick were helped or forced along till they came to villages where they could camp and recuperate.

Eight days they feasted in plenty, drinking wine from jars where they stooped and "sucked like oxen," obtaining fresh horses, and getting information about the country.

Refreshed and unopposed, they made one hundred and fifty miles in the next nine days; then they cut their way through a strong force of Chalybians who held the passes, and advanced another hundred miles into the land of the Taochians.

Here matters began to look very serious. The natives had carried off all their belongings into their fastnesses, and provisions ran short.

Coming to one of these natural fortresses, without houses but containing great numbers of men and women and cattle, Cheirosophus in the van attacked at once. His companies had to assault one at a time, since the place was surrounded with precipitous cliffs; and they suffered sorely.

Xenophon came up with the rear-guard.

"You come very seasonably," said Cheirosophus, "for this place must be taken or the army will starve."

"What can hinder us from carrying it by assault?" demanded Xenophon, as they held a council.

"There is no access to it but this," said the other; "and when any of our men press up they roll down stones from the rock, which treat us as you see"—pointing to soldiers with broken legs and ribs.

"But," persisted the leader, "when they have rolled all their stones, what can stop us then? I see only a few men, and of these but a handful that are armed. The space exposed to these stones is about a hundred and fifty feet long, and a hundred feet of that is covered with pine-trees; how can our men suffer from the stones if they shelter themselves among these? Then, when the stones stop, we must rush the remaining fifty feet."

"But they will begin to shower them on us the moment we start for the trees."

"That's the very thing we want," declared Xenophon, "for in that way their supply of stones will be the sooner exhausted. Anyhow, let us gain those trees so close to them; we can easily retreat if we must."

So the two led forward seventy men, in open order, each sheltering himself as best he might. Soldiers and captains vied with each other in quick dashes to draw the fire of these primitive but deadly missiles. Dodging out from behind the tree-trunks and back again, they braved the cart-loads of stones that were hurled or rolled down the steep incline upon them. Ever working their way up, a final rush brought them to the top. The resolute barbarians would not surrender: the women threw their children over the precipice, then leaped themselves; and most of the

men followed. But the captured sheep and oxen saved the Greeks from the starvation which had looked them in the face.

They needed all this supply as they battled their way for two hundred miles through the land of the Chalybians and Scythinians, for the former not only carried off all their cattle and grain, but proved the most valiant warriors they had yet encountered. At the town of Gymnias, however, the Governor of the land offered to have them guided through his enemies' territory. And those battered adventurers thrilled with fresh determination when this guide offered his life as forfeit if he should not in five days show them the sea.

Onward they pressed, hearts beating high.

On the fifth day, as the vanguard ascended the holy mountain of Theches, suddenly a hoarse shout rose from the head of the column.

Supposing that this meant a fresh onslaught, Xenophon galloped up from the rear, which was constantly harried by the bands hanging onto the line of march.

He came nearer the scene of tumult. Presently words formed themselves amid the wild shouting, wondrous words to those intrepid warriors:

"The sea! The sea!" men cried in a very delirium of joy.

Everybody now rushed forward, men and animals.

It was indeed the smiling waters of the Black Sea which rippled as far as eye could reach. At its western end, as every man realized, lay the Hellespont and their own fair land. They felt as if they were already gazing upon that home toward which they had striven for months, against such daunting obstacles. The sea! It was there, right ahead. Forgotten all labors and

dangers. They embraced one another in ecstasy, while tears streamed down their gaunt, bronzed cheeks.

The next week, and the hostile Colchians were as nothing. Splitting a path through these last enemies as a launching ship divides the waves, they came to Trebisonde on the shores of the Black Sea. They were once more among their fellow Greeks.

The great march was accomplished. They had written their imperishable record on the book of history. Free men and self-governing, they had defied the millions of the Persian despot in his own land. Like their forefathers at Thermopylæ, they had taught the Persian and his subjects to tremble at the very sight of a Grecian pike.

Among the deeds of discipline, the march of Xenophon and his Ten Thousand has yet to be surpassed. The discipline was voluntary, from within, imposed upon themselves by self-reliant freemen.

And that is a combination not to be overcome by any enemy.

CHAPTER XXXV

“THE GUARD DIES BUT NEVER SURRENDERS!”

THE destiny of Europe hung upon the issue of the day.

That universal menace of Napoleon's conquering genius which had settled down upon the whole Continent for twenty years, and which all had fancied was removed forever when the Allies entered Paris, forced the Emperor to abdicate, and exiled him to the tiny island of Elba—this threat to the world's freedom had suddenly startled all men by flashing again upon the scene like lightning from a clear sky. Napoleon had stolen from his island and landed in France; his conquering veterans had flocked about him; the puppet King of the Powers, Louis XVIII, had fled in terror before the returning Man; the Hundred Days had thrilled the world with their dramatic, swift unfolding of history-making pageantry—renewed delirious France and its Genius, darting rapier-like thrusts against the Seven Nations who proclaimed Napoleon outlaw.

Then the crisis. In June, 1815, Napoleon had made one of his inspired strokes through Belgium at the English and Prussian armies, to annihilate them before the slowly advancing, multitudinous hosts of Russians, Austrians, and Bavarians should reach the Rhine, or the Spaniards and Portuguese pass the Pyrenees.

Hurling his five army corps and cavalry reserves in three vast columns upon the key point of Brussels, on the glorious anniversary of Marengo and of Friedland (each of which had remade the map of Europe), he fell upon Wellington and Blücher like a thunderbolt. It looked as if the eagles of victory had resumed their wonted perch upon the imperial standards.

But the victor of Talavera and Vittoria opposed immovable British doggedness to the dashing assaults of Marshal Ney. Old "Marshal Forward," as the Prussian grenadiers called Blücher, drove his eighty thousand men through swamps and foes and cannon-hail to the essential junction with his English allies: "But you *must* get on," he told his despairing soldiers. "I have pledged my word to Wellington."

The titanic struggle between the two greatest military champions of their age had swayed to and fro with varying fortunes in different quarters. Blücher was beginning to press violently on Napoleon's right. The Emperor dashed his cavalry again and again upon the English centre, struggling to break those stubborn squares, which bristled death.

"The first charge was magnificent," says a British major who was in the brigade where the attack centred. "As soon as they quickened their trot into a gallop, the cuirassiers bent their heads so that the peaks of their helmets looked like visors, and they seemed cased in armor from the plume to the saddle.

"Not a shot was fired till they were within thirty yards, when the word was given and our men fired away at them. The effect was magical. Through the smoke we could see helmets falling, cavaliers starting from their seats with convulsive springs as they received our balls, horses plunging and rearing in the

agonies of fright and pain, and crowds of the soldiery dismounted, part of the squadron in retreat, but the more daring remainder backing their horses to force them on our bayonets. Our fire soon disposed of these gentlemen.

"The main body reformed in our front and gallantly repeated their attacks. In fact from this time (about four o'clock) till near six, we had a constant repetition of these brave but unavailing charges. There was no difficulty in repulsing them, but our ammunition decreased alarmingly. At length an artillery-wagon galloped up, emptied two or three casks of cartridges into the square, and we were all comfortable.

"The best cavalry is contemptible to a steady and well-supplied infantry regiment; even our men saw this and began to pity the useless perseverance of their assailants, and, as they advanced, would growl out:

"'Here come these fools again!'

"One of their superior officers tried a *ruse de guerre*, by advancing and dropping his sword, as though he surrendered; some of us were deceived by him, but Halkett ordered the men to fire, and he coolly retired, saluting us.

"Their devotion was invincible. One officer whom we had taken prisoner was asked what force Napoleon might have in the field, and replied with a smile of mingled derision and threatening:

"'*Vous verrez bientôt sa force, messieurs!*' (You'll see his force quick enough, gentlemen!)

"A private cuirassier was wounded and dragged into the square; his only cry was:

"'*Tuez donc, tuez, tuez moi, soldats!*' (Kill then, kill, kill me, soldiers!)

"And as one of our men dropped dead close to him,

he seized his bayonet and forced it into his own neck; but this not despatching him, he raised up his cuirass, and, plunging the bayonet into his stomach, kept working it about till he ceased to breathe."

But this pounding of cavalry and the more effective artillery rain of round shot and grape fell upon an imperturbability which only commented: "Hard pounding this, gentlemen; we'll try who can pound the longest."

Napoleon, who had watched the shock and retreat, the ebb and flow, through a telescope from a little hillock in the centre of the French position near La Belle Alliance, saw with his unerring gaze that the crisis had come.

He determined to make his supreme stroke. The Old Guard had not yet come into action. It would have served to cover his retreat to the French frontier. But this meant ruin to the splendid dream which had reared itself into actuality as rapidly as the thunderheads roll up into rounded beauty in the west. His whole dazzling career had been wrested from destiny by risking everything when the moment arrived. As ever, he backed his star.

Between seven and eight o'clock the Old Guard formed into two columns on the hillside near La Belle Alliance. With the superb figure of Ney, "bravest of the brave," at their head, they defiled past the squat figure on the white Persian charger which was in their eyes the embodiment of victory, of glory, of France.

Past him they marched, these thousands of hawk-eyed, stern-faced, battle-scarred veterans, in their bearskin shakos, punctuated by their storied eagle badges, each battalion led by a general; these giants who had shattered the Mamelukes at the Pyramids, the

Turkish infantry at Aboukir; who had scaled the Alps, conquered Italy from Austria at Marengo; these heroes of Ulm, of Austerlitz, of Jena, of Wagram; these thousands of vital, intense personalities fused by their master into one overwhelming machine of death; these very pillars of the world-subduing conqueror who had become to them a legend, a personified deity of battles.

And when this sphinx-like figure of incarnate power raised its arm and without a word pointed to the enemy, a vast, hoarse roar split the air, drowning even the thunder of the cannon and the rattle of musketry:

"Vive l'Empereur!"

Driven by a frenzy of proud and inflamed resolve, beneath a cloud of cannon-balls belched forth from their own guns over their heads upon the foe, they dashed in one mighty thrust against that so-many-times-battered right centre of the English line, between Hougoumont and La Haye Sainte.

Beyond the crest of the hill lay Maitland's brigade of British Guards, sheltering themselves from the withering fire of the French guns on the opposite heights.

Upward drove the Old Guard, ploughed by shot and shell from the English cannon. So close to the top were they that their artillery had to cease firing, since they could not shell the enemy without endangering their own grenadiers.

Ney's horse had been shot. On foot, sword in hand, the dashing marshal led the charge. The massive column topped the rise. To their amazement not a soldier was in sight. The only evidence of the enemy which their eager eyes could detect through the dense, billowing, shell-rent pall of smoke was a small group of

mounted officers. But one tall, immobile, silent figure was the Iron Duke himself. He sat there like some statue from a sculptor's hand.

With wild cheers the French veterans poured over the crest and down the gentle decline toward this brain and will of the opposing army. Not a shot was fired.

When they were within fifty yards, the statue spoke: "Up, Guards, and at them!"

As when Cadmus sowed the dragon's teeth, the very earth bristled into warriors. In an instant, as if evoked before their very eyes by a magic word, there appeared a line of the British Guards, erect, four deep, drawn up as if on parade.

Sharp commands crackled amid their silence. Like some multiplied Briareus, the line swung its thousands of muskets forward with a single motion. A single horizontal sweep of flame; a single roar of many guns. And when the spouting blast of lead had done its work, three hundred of the French veterans were down. A storm of cannon-balls and canister swept them, riddling the tricolor flag above the eagles.

The French officers sprang forward; far in advance of their men they opened out their column to increase their return fire. But Maitland's line poured in volley after volley, decimating the attackers. As even they wavered, another command rang out among the scarlet lines; with fixed bayonets the British soldiers charged and drove the proud Guard headlong down the hill again.

Quite undismayed by this repulse of their fellows, the second column slanted over toward the right to hit the same deadly point. Exposed to the batteries and the volleys of Maitland's triumphant brigade on

their front, they were also swept by another brigade which had been formed parallel to their left flank.

The night was growing dark. All about them they could feel that most disorganizing of all shocks, the giving away and rout of the rest of their army. They could no longer see that conquering Emperor on his white horse whose very presence had so often inspired them to wrest victory from defeat. They heard the *Vive l'Empereur!* in every quarter changing to a panic-stricken *Sauve qui peut!* The demoralizing sense of treachery filled the confusion.

It was suicide. But they fought as if they saw success right before them.

They had but one reply to friends who counselled retreat, to foes who urged surrender:

“The Guard dies, but never surrenders!”

“Ney,* desperate and grand with the consciousness of accepted death, offered himself to every blow in that storm. His fifth horse was killed under him. Bathed in perspiration, his eye aflame, foam on his lips, his uniform unbuttoned, one of his epaulets half cut through by the sabre-cut of a horse Guard, and his decoration with the great eagle dented by a bullet, bleeding, muddy, magnificent, a broken sword in his hand, he shouted:

“‘Come and see how a marshal of France dies on the battle-field!’

“But in vain; he did not die. He was haggard and indignant, and hurled at Drouet d’Erlon the question:

“‘Are you not going to get yourself killed?’

“He yelled amid the roar of all this artillery engaged in crushing a handful of men.

“‘Oh, there is nothing for me! I should like all these English bullets to enter my bowels!’”

* Victor Hugo.

When there were but one hundred and fifty men left of that great column, this indomitable fragment charged through the inferno of grape-shot, with fixed bayonets, upon the thousands facing them.

"All is lost," said Napoleon as he saw, through the deepening obscurity, his grenadiers' tall bearskins sink into the sea of English men and horses.

"What does it matter?" remarked Wellington, impassive as ever. "Let them fire as they like, the battle is won, and my life is of no consequence now."

"Leave all the rest to me," said Prussian Blücher. "I undertake the pursuit."

"The rout in the rear of the Guard was melancholy," says Hugo.

"The army suddenly gave way on all sides simultaneously—at Hougoumont, La Haye Sainte, Papelotte, and Plancenoit. The cry of 'Treachery!' was followed by that of 'Save yourselves!' An army disbanding is like a thaw—all gives way, cracks, floats, rolls, falls, comes into collision, and dashes forward. Unprecedented disintegration! Ney borrows a horse, leaps upon it, and without hat, stock, or sword, dashes across the Brussels road, stopping at once English and French. He tries to hold back the army. He recalls it; he insults it; he clings wildly to the rout. He is overwhelmed. The soldiers fly from him, shouting 'Long live Marshal Ney!' Two of Durutte's regiments move backward and forward in terror, tossed, as it were, between the sabres of the hussars and the musketry fire of Kempt's, Best's, and Pack's brigades. A rout is the worst of all conflicts; friends kill each other in order to escape, squadrons and battalions dash against and destroy each other—the vast foam of battle. Lobau at one extremity and Reille at the other

are swept away by the torrent. In vain does Napoleon build a wall of what is left of his Guard. In vain does he expend the squadrons of his body-guard in a final effort. Quiot retreats before Vivian, Kellermann before Vandeleur, Lobau before Bülow, Moreau before Pirch, and Domon and Subervic before Prince William of Prussia. Guyot, who led the Emperor's squadrons to the charge, falls beneath the horses of English dragoons. Napoleon gallops along the line of fugitives, harangues, urges, threatens, and implores; all the mouths that shouted '*Vive l'Empereur!*' in the morning remain wide open; they hardly know him. The Prussian cavalry, which has come up fresh, dashes forward, cuts down, kills, and exterminates. Horses plunge; guns take flight; the soldiers of the artillery-train unharness the horses from the caissons and escape on them; wagons, overthrown, and with their four wheels in the air, block the road and supply opportunities for massacre. Men crush each other and trample over dead and living alike; arms are lost; a multitude, wild with terror, fills the roads, the paths, the bridges, the plains, the hills, the valleys, and the woods, which are thronged by this flight of forty thousand men. Cries of despair; knapsacks and muskets cast into the wheat; no comrades, no officers, no generals more—indescribable terror. Ziethen puts France to the sword at his ease; the lions become kids. Such was this flight.

“At Genappe an effort was made to turn, to make a stand, and to rally. Lobau collected three hundred men; the entrance to the village was barriaded; but at the first round of Prussian canister all took to flight again, and Lobau was made prisoner. That volley of shot may still be seen, buried in the gable of an old

brick house on the right of the road just before you reach Genappe. The Prussians dashed into Genappe, doubtless made furious by such small victory. The pursuit was monstrous, for Blücher ordered extermination. Roguet had set the mournful example of threatening with death any French grenadier who brought in a Prussian prisoner; and Blücher surpassed Roguet. Duchesme, general of the Young Guard, surrendered his sword to a Death's Head hussar, who took the sword and killed the prisoner. The victory was completed by the assassination of the vanquished. Let us punish, as we are writing history—old Blücher dishonored himself. This ferocity set the seal on disaster. The desperate rout passed through Genappe, passed through Quatre Bras, passed through Sombreffe, passed through Frasnes, passed through Thuin, passed through Charleroi, and only stopped at the frontier. Alas! and who was it flying in this way? The Grand Army.

“Did this vertigo, this terror, this overthrow of the greatest bravery that ever astonished history, take place without a cause? No. The shadow of a mighty right hand is cast over Waterloo. It is the day of destiny; and the force which is greater than man produced that day. Hence the terror, hence all those great souls laying down their swords. Those who had conquered Europe fell crushed, having nothing more to say or do, and feeling the shadow of a terrible presence. *Hoc erat in fatis*. On that day the perspective of the human race was changed. Waterloo is the hinge of the nineteenth century. The disappearance of the great man was necessary for the advent of the great age. He who is answerable undertook the task. The panic of heroes admits of explanation. In the battle of Waterloo there

is more than a storm-cloud—there is a meteor. God passed by.

"At nightfall, in a field near Genappe, Bernard and Bertrand seized by the skirt of his coat and detained a haggard, thoughtful, gloomy man, who, carried thus far by the current of the rout, had just dismounted, passed the bridle over his arm, and was now, with wandering eye, returning alone to Waterloo.

"It was Napoleon, still striving to advance—mighty somnambulist of a vanished dream.

"A few squares of the Guard, standing motionless amid the flow of the rout, like rocks in running water, held out till night. Night came, death also; they awaited the double shadow, and let it surround them. Each regiment, isolated from the others, and no longer connected with the army, which was broken on all sides, died where it stood. In order to perform this last exploit they had taken up position, some on the heights of Rassomme, others on the plain of Mont St. Jean. The gloomy squares, deserted, conquered and terrible, struggled tremendously with death; for Ulm, Wagram, Jena, and Friedland died with them.

"When twilight set in, at nine in the evening, one square still remained at the foot of the plateau of Mont St. Jean. In this fatal valley, at the foot of the slope scaled by the cuirassiers, now inundated by the English masses, beneath the converging fire of the hostile and victorious artillery, under a fearful hail-storm of projectiles, this square still resisted. It was commanded by an obscure officer named Cambronne. At each volley the square diminished, but continued to reply to the canister with musketry-fire, constantly contracting its four walls. Fugitives in the distance,

pausing for a moment breathless, listened in the darkness to that gloomy, diminishing thunder.

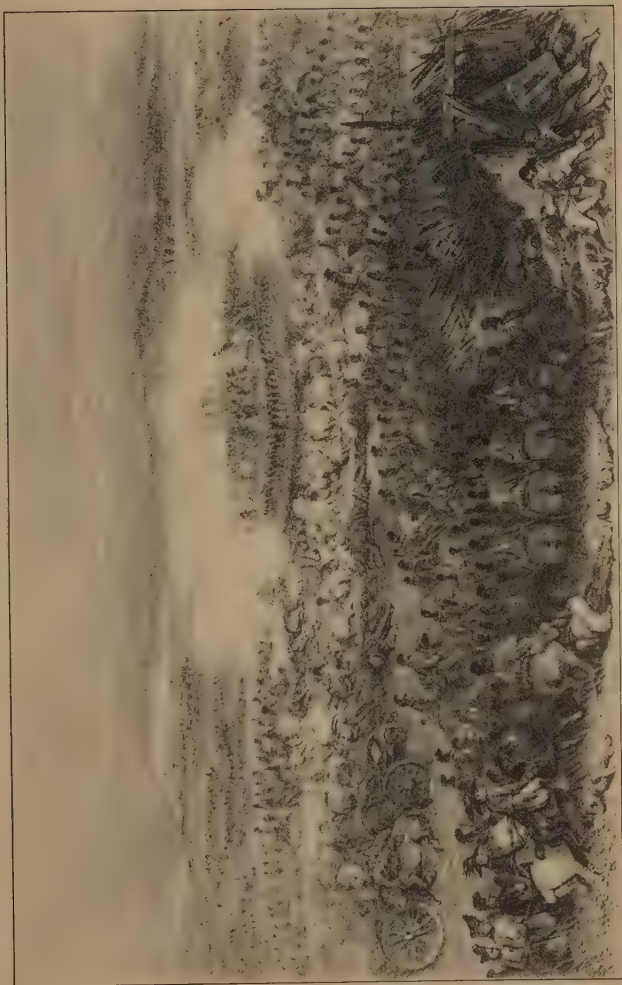
“When this legion had become a mere handful, when their colors were but a rag, when their ammunition was exhausted and muskets were clubbed, when the pile of corpses was greater than the living group, the victors felt a sort of sacred awe, and the English artillery, taking breath, was silent. It was a sort of respite. Those combatants had around them an army of spectres, outlines of mounted men, the black profile of guns, and the white sky visible through the wheels; the colossal death’s-head, which heroes ever glimpse in the smoke of battle, advanced and looked at them. They could hear in the twilight gloom the guns being loaded; the lighted matches, like the eyes of tigers in the night, formed a circle round their heads. The linstocks of the English batteries approached the guns, and at that moment an English general—Colville, according to some, Maitland, according to others—holding the supreme moment suspended over the heads of those men, shouted to them, with emotion: ‘Brave Frenchmen, surrender!’”

Cambronne answered with an exclamation of the gutter.

“Among these giants, then, there was a Titan—Cambronne.

“To utter this word and then die, what could be more sublime! To be willing to die is to die; and it is not his fault if, mowed by grape-shot, he survived.

“The man who won the battle of Waterloo was not Napoleon with his routed army; it was not Wellington, giving way at four o’clock and desperate at five; it was not Blücher, for he had not fought. The man who won the battle of Waterloo was Cambronne.



“When twilight set in . . . one square still remained at the foot of the plateau”

"To smite with the lightning of such a word the thunderbolt which kills you is to be victorious. To make such a reply to disaster, to say this to destiny, to lay such a base for the lion which was to mark that spot, to hurl this answer to the rain of the night, to the treacherous wall of Hougomont, to the hollow road of Ohain, to the delay of Grouchy, to the arrival of Blücher, to be irony in the tomb, to stand erect as it were after having fallen, to submerge in two syllables the European coalition, to present to Kings the *latrinæ* already known to the Cæsars, to make the last of words the first by imparting to it the brilliancy of France, to insultingly close Waterloo by Shrove Tuesday repartee, to supplement Leonidas by Rabelais, to sum up this victory in one supreme word impossible to repeat, to lose ground and preserve history, after such a carnage to have the laugh on his own side—this was immense.

"It was to defy the lightning with Æschylean grandeur."

"The utterance of Cambronne has the effect of an explosion. It is the breaking of a heart with disdain; it is the excess of agony which breaks forth. Who conquered? Wellington? No. Without Blücher he had been lost. Was it Blücher? No. If Wellington had not begun, Blücher could not have ended. This Cambronne, this newcomer upon the scene, this unknown soldier, this infinitesimal atom of the war, felt that there was a lie beneath the catastrophe, which doubled its bitterness; and at the instant when he was bursting with rage they offered him that mockery—life! How could he refrain from breaking out? There they are—all the Kings of Europe, the lucky generals, the thundering Joves. They have one hundred thousand victorious soldiers; behind them, a hundred thousand,

a million. Their cannon, with matches lighted, are gaping; they have trampled beneath their heel the Imperial Guard and the Grand Army; they have crushed Napoleon; Cambronne alone remains—only this earthworm is left to protest, and he will protest. He looked for a word as he would for a sword. Foam is on his lips, and this foam is the word. In presence of this victory, prodigious yet commonplace, of this victory without victors, the desperate man stands erect once more; he submits to its magnitude, but he demonstrates its nothingness. He does more than spit on it; and yielding to numbers, force, and matter, he finds for his soul one sole term—*excrement*. We repeat it, to say this, to do this, to invent this, is to win the victory.

“At this fatal moment the spirit of the great past entered into this unknown man. Cambronne found the word of Waterloo as Rouget de l’Isle found the ‘Marseillaise.’ A breath from the divine whirlwind passed over these men, and they shuddered; one sang the supreme song, the other uttered the fearful cry. This word, full of Titanic scorn, was hurled by Cambronne, not only at Europe in the name of the empire—that would be little—but at the past in the name of the Revolution. We hear and see in Cambronne the old soul of the giants. It seems as if Danton were speaking, or Kleber roaring.

“To Cambronne’s exclamation an English voice replied: ‘Fire!’ The batteries flashed, the hillside trembled; from all those throats of brass came a last eruption of grape. A vast cloud of smoke, dimly silvered by the moon, rolled up; and when the smoke cleared away there was nothing left. The dreaded remnant was annihilated; the Guard was dead. The

four walls of the living redoubt lay low, with here and there a scarcely perceptible quiver among the corpses. Thus the French legions, grander than those of Rome, expired at Mont St. Jean, on the earth sodden with rain and blood, in the gloomy corn-fields at the spot where now at four o'clock in the morning, Joseph, the driver of the mail-coach from Nivelles, passes, whistling, and gayly whipping up his horses."

CHAPTER XXXVI

BALACLAVA

THE Allies—British, French, and Turkish—were closing in on Sevastopol in the Crimean War. On October 24, 1854, the nine hundred and thirty Sutherland Highlanders were in position in front of the little town of Balaclava, where were five thousand Turks; between the lines were some one thousand five hundred cavalry, composed of Scarlett's "Heavies," the Light Brigade under Lord Lucan, some Scots Grays, Inniskillings, and Dragoons.

A month before, the Highland Brigade, especially the Black Watch, had added a red badge to their proud record at the battle of the Alma, where three regiments of them had routed twelve Russian battalions, including the Czar's picked infantry division.

Raised originally about 1725 as a local militia to suppress the "blackmailing," cattle-raiding caterans of the Highlands, and christened the "Black Watch" because of their duties and their dark-colored tartans, this regiment began to make a name for itself as soon as it was incorporated into the British army, after the failure of the '45 rising shattered the last dreams of the Jacobites. As the Royal Highlanders, their official battle honors began in the West India campaigns of 1759 and 1762; in Wolfe's capture of Quebec, they shared the glory; in Flanders, in 1795, they won their precious red "hackle" for saving guns lost by the Dragoons; at New Orleans, in 1815, the 93d had won immortality

by such an advance into the murderous American fire as has seldom been witnessed; on many a bloody field in the Indian mutiny, in the Peninsular Campaign, at Waterloo, and in South Africa, they had made the name of Black Watch stand for the utmost pitch of disciplined and desperate valor.

Hardly behind them in fame were the Sutherlands, Gordons, and Argylls, each regiment of whom had done its part over and over in establishing that tradition of headlong gallantry which in the Great War was to win for the kilted Highlanders from the bewildered enemy the sobriquet of "the ladies from hell."

Balaclava, lying on the coast, was the key to the Allies' position: if the Russians should capture it, the British lines of communication would be cut and the whole force would face annihilation.

In the gray dawn of the 25th the expected attack came. Hordes of the enemy swarmed down the hillside—twenty-five battalions of infantry; thirty-four squadrons of cavalry, and seventy-eight guns. The Turks promptly fled from their redoubts. The Sutherlands, behind them, calmly watched these disorderly columns streaming back upon their own lines. Their confidence was infectious, and the Turks rallied feebly, forming on either flank. The Russian guns opened upon the 93d. The mass of cavalry broke from the main body and charged straight upon the waiting Scots.

Sir Colin Campbell drew up his tiny force in a line only two deep.

"Now, men," he shouted, "remember there is no retreat from here. You must die where you stand!"

"Ay, ay, Sir Colin," ran the answering murmur; "an need be, we'll do that."

“The whole line was advanced to the top of the hill, a movement that so excited the men that they nearly charged the Russians. But that was not Sir Colin’s intention, and halting them he calmly awaited the onslaught of the Russian cavalry, merely giving the order for the Sutherlands to stand in line. The noise of the thundering hoofs grew ever louder. It echoed in the ears of the Turks, and as dense masses of horses bounded in all their picturesque strength toward them, they broke on the instant and ran in a frenzy of terror to the rear, extending their hands to the vessels riding at anchor, and shouting in their panic: ‘Ship! Ship!’ To the Eastern mind it seemed the merest folly to await such a crash of cavalry.

“But not a man of the 93d moved. Just as the French cuirassiers at Quatre Bras had come flaunting their swords and breastplates in the sunlight, so the Russian cavalry, on that winter’s morn, came rushing in their hundreds on the ‘thin red line.’ Lord Wolseley has written that the pace of their advance must have been three hundred and fifty yards a minute, while behind them, squadron upon squadron—like the successive waves of a sea—raced their supports. ‘In other parts of the field,’ an eye-witness has recorded, ‘with breathless suspense every one waited the bursting of the wave upon the line of Gaelic rock.’ Suddenly, when it was feared the Highlanders in their forlorn bravery were already overwhelmed, the splutter of fire passed down the line. It was done without flurry or haste, but the effect was incalculable. The whole front rank of the cavalry stumbled and recoiled; horses and men fell, the second rank was baffled and helpless, the speed was in an instant checked, and the Sutherlands, calmly reloading, discharged a second volley into the enemy.



The Russian cavalry came rushing in their hundreds on the "thin red line"

But the Russians were not beaten so easily. Breaking away, a detachment of cavalry cantered off to attack the 93d on the flank. Quite calmly Sir Colin wheeled a company of his men to face them. This was done without any confusion and another volley decided the action. It was stated afterward that, although few of the Russians were killed, nearly every man and horse was wounded."

Thus did these five hundred and fifty Highland infantrymen check the advance which looked irresistible, and the success of which would have had such momentous results.

But the most famous action of this famous day was still to come.

First the brigade of English "Heavies" took their turn.

"The Russian cavalry—we must not forget there were about two thousand of them—had now halted, a great, inert mass. General Scarlett wheeled the left column into line, a short line of barely three hundred sabres, and charged; the second column conforming, came on in support.

"Scarlett himself, being a somewhat old-looking but vigorous man, with snow-white hair and mustache, who rode straight and sat strongly in the saddle, headed the charge; his aide-de-camp, Alec Elliott, who had seen much fighting in India, galloped by his side; close behind came the general's trumpeter and his orderly: and these four men—general, lieutenant, and two private troopers—crashed first and alone into the middle of the enemy's heavy column, where they were at once engaged in a hand-to-hand fight, sword against sword. What the fight was may be judged from the fact that the general received five wounds and Elliott received

fourteen. Just as the leading British squadrons drove vigorously in the front Russian mass, three British guns, firing from the high ground above the scene, found their target in the rear squadrons of the unwieldy formation of the Russians, and rendered it unsteady.

“One squadron of the Inniskilling Dragoons followed Scarlett, with it came two squadrons of the Scots Grays—two regiments which have ever been close comrades and friends. On each flank behind rode in second line a second squadron of the Inniskillings, and the 5th Dragoon Guards, followed by the 1st or Royal Dragoons, who ‘conforming,’ for the regiment had received no order, rode at speed in support of their comrades. As the squadrons raced forward, eager to overtake their leader, who was already in the thick of the fight, the Russian cavalry advanced a little, but then halted irresolute, apparently intending to deploy, their very numbers helping to encumber and confuse them. The impact of our charging horsemen carried all before it, ‘swords rose and fell,’ then the vast mass of Russian cavalry broke up—two thousand conquered by eight hundred—and, turning, rode fast and in disorder from the field.

“This ‘truly magnificent charge,’ as it was called by a French general who was present, ‘the most glorious thing’ he ever saw, won universal admiration from all. Sir Colin rode over to his countrymen, and, uncovering, apostrophized them thus: ‘Grays, gallant Grays, I am sixty-one years of age, but if I were young again I should be proud to serve in your ranks.’ Lord Raglan despatched an aide-de-camp with a message to Scarlett, saying: ‘Well done.’

“The broken Russian cavalry, retreating, passed

through a gap in the Causeway Heights, within five hundred yards of the Light Brigade, six hundred and seventy-five men. Major Morris, commanding the 17th Lancers, begged Lord Cardigan to attack them, and on his refusal, asked that the 17th Lancers might do so, but in vain. The Russian cavalry, shattered by Scarlett, could have been utterly routed by Cardigan. He sat still, and the enemy was allowed to escape.

"It seemed to Lord Raglan, who, sitting on the western edge of the 'Upland,' six hundred feet above the Tchernaya, could see all that passed below, as though the enemy, by bringing up horse teams, intended to carry off the guns captured in the redoubts abandoned by the Turks, and he sent Captain Nolan to Lord Lucan with an order in writing, 'directing the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, and prevent the enemy from carrying off the guns.'

"These guns were on the Causeway, higher ground than where Lord Lucan was sitting when he received the order, and he could not see them, or what the Russians were doing, and he did not understand the order. Lord Lucan did not ride up to the higher ground, thinking that Lord Raglan meant the Russian guns in action in the valley, and asked: 'Attack! Attack what guns?' Nettled by this, Nolan, not realizing that Lucan had not been on the higher ground, with a wave of his hand, replied: 'There, my lord, is your enemy; there are your guns.'"

Thus through a complete misunderstanding was launched the most celebrated charge in all history, that "Six Hundred" of the Light Brigade whom Tennyson's poem has made familiar to every English-speaking child. The poet was well within the facts in de-

claring that "some one had blundered." Any reader of the record can judge for himself where the responsibility lay.

"It is clear that Captain Nolan understood Lord Raglan's intentions, for starting from the left of the regiment in front line of the attack—*i. e.*, 17th Lancers—he rode diagonally across Lord Cardigan's front as that peer in the centre of the brigade led straight down the valley. As he crossed the front of the 13th Light Dragoons, the right-hand regiment, riding toward the redoubts where the Russians were trying to remove the guns abandoned by the Turks, and when some short distance from Lord Cardigan's right front, a shell splinter carried away part of his chest, though for some seconds his body remained in the saddle and the sword high in air.

"Lord Lucan, having misconstrued his orders, and not exercising his own judgment in correcting them, rode over to where Lord Cardigan sat at the head of the Light Brigade, and told him to advance down the valley.

"‘Certainly,’ Lord Cardigan said; ‘but allow me to point out that there is a battery in front of us and guns and riflemen on either flank.’

"‘I know it,’ replied Lord Lucan, ‘but Lord Raglan will have it. We have no choice but to obey.’

"Then Lord Cardigan, turning round, gave the order: ‘The brigade will advance.’

"Led by Lord Cardigan," says Sir Edward Hamley, who was an eye-witness of the charge, "the lines continued to advance at a steady trot, and in a minute or two entered the zone of fire, where the air was filled with the rush of shot, the bursting of shells, and the moan of bullets, while amid the infernal din the work

of destruction went on, and men and horses were incessantly dashed to the ground.

“This fire came from the guns on the flanks; presently, the brigade was near enough to be heavily smitten by the two batteries in front; but, nothing daunted, the survivors increased their pace so much as to lose cohesion, and dashed in among the guns. The Russian gunners were cut down as they served them. Small knots of Englishmen charged straight at great masses of the enemy’s cavalry and forced them to retreat. The 8th Hussars, in third line, reversed their front, and charging a Russian cavalry regiment, overthrew it. The struggle went on between the many and the still undaunted few, until the latter had melted away.

“Then all that was left of the Light Brigade emerged from the smoke of the battle, and the survivors came dropping back by twos and threes across the plains, covered by the 4th Chasseurs d’Afrique on the eastern flank. Two small bodies only of the brigade retained any signs of coherence. About seventy men of the 17th Lancers and 8th Hussars kept together in formation, and cut their way home through three squadrons of Russian Lancers; another party of about the same strength, of 4th and 11th Hussars, were brought out by Sir George Paget, and overcame an intercepting force of Russians. But after the charge no light cavalry regiment existed as such; all had been shattered. Out of some six hundred and seventy-three men, two hundred and forty-seven were killed or wounded; and almost all the horses were killed. This happened in twenty minutes, including the advance, the encounter, and the retreat.

“Lord Cardigan—who had been the first to reach

the guns—did not go farther than eighty yards beyond the Russian batteries, and then rode back alone to Lord Lucan, some of the brigade going on to the Tchernaya River. The French general, Bosquet, who saw the charge, said with discriminating criticism: '*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*' (It is magnificent, but it isn't war.)

"The Russians retained possession of the Causeway Heights. On the other hand, the determined courage of our cavalry greatly raised our military prestige, and the Russian horsemen never again met our troops in the open field." *

And as for the men themselves who did this thing:

"When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!"

* Mark Twain relates that his friend Twichell once got into conversation with the honest eight-foot giant of a cheap "show" that was exhibiting in a miserable shed in Hartford, Connecticut. This man had been a native colonel in a Turkish regiment at Balaclava, and so impressed had he been by the audacity of the Light Brigade's charge, and its effect on the enemy, that he was firmly convinced some cold brain in the English high command had figured out this ghastly sacrifice was the only way to win a battle already lost.

DISCARD

Canier, Henry W
The Book of Bravery

